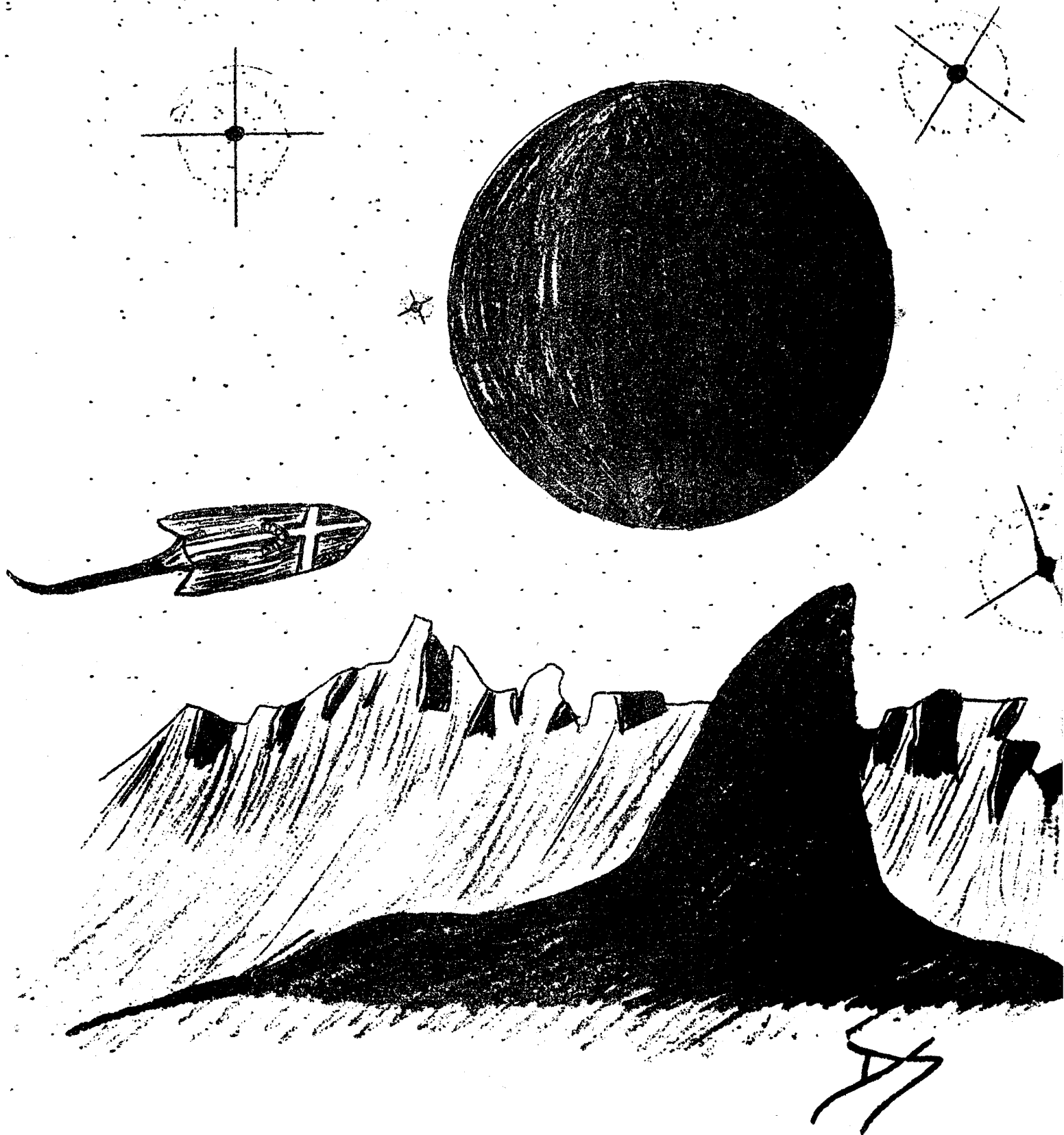


Bill H

AAA-TECH



The Amateur Press Association for and by
members of General Technics

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zoo, 49007, (616) 342-4967.

Shalmaneser (Emergency Editor): Tullio Proni, same as above.

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NEW PAGE COUNT

69

The next deadline is Monday, APRIL 7 (or MiniCon weekend)

The Copy Count is 35

YOUR ACCOUNT BEFORE POSTAGE IS \$ 8.56

THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DROPPED: Clyde

Those who promised to postmail before April 7: Colsher

Those who owe pages (or will be dropped next ish): Misha,
Alice, Steve, Jamie

Those who owe money: NOBODY (but I seem to have lost your
accounting, Greg. Woops)

REINSTATED: Gordon, Mike

ROSTER

Mike Bentley (3), 514 W. High St., Urbana, IL 61801, (217) 344-
4718
Bill Colsher (9), 4328 Nutmeg Lane #111, Lisle, IL 60532 (312)
964-1168
Gordon Garb (12), 505 N. Rock Rd. #103, Wichita, Ks, 67206
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Steve Johnson (8), 2428 N. Summit, Columbus, OH 43202, (614)
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60070, (312) 398-7742
Greg Ruffa (11), 1220 Lenape Way, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076, (201)
753-9207
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333-4158
Renee Sieber (4), 530 W. Walnut St., Kalamazoo, MI 49007, (616)
342-4967
Dick Smith (6), 426 Custer Ave. #2S, Evanston, IL 60202, (312)
864-1618 home, 266-4384 work
Rod Smith (7), 922 Belvoir Dr., KY, 40601
Donna Struwe (19), 2545 W. Winona St., Chicago, IL 60625, (312)
275-3428
Keith Thorne (1), same as Bentley's
Doug Van Dorn (20), 307 West St. #D, Elmhurst, IL 60126, (312)
833-6714

A STERN MEMO TO MYSELF FROM THE CHAIR

(Okay, Renee, try to get yourself out of this one.)

Due to my leniency in letting in contributions way past
the official deadline and not one but TWO bouts with flu (one of
which I'm still recovering from) the apa is late. Very late.
For that I am sorry. But I'm only going to extend the next
deadline to April 7 and that's only because that's the Monday
After MiniCon and I was going to do it anyway. However, so as
not to seem too totalitarian about the affair of deadlines, I'll
make it official and enclose a ballot asking whether I should

continue to be lax and how long I should be lax for. Also, I recall, in scanning the contributions of this ish, that Bill Higgins liked the name APA-RATUS. So I'll put that on the ballot, too.

NOTES: Don't collate your zines (this refers to you, Doug)!! Not unless they are large (15 pages plus) and then you should separate them with paperclips. But it is infinitely more complicated to pick up 2 sheets together than to pick them up separately.

Greg, I may appear to be an ignorant savage, but what are William Typographers.

Due to a mistake in forgetting to add covers as pages to fulfill people's minac requirements, I listed Alice as to be dropped and Donna as owing pages to this ish. I'm sorry, folks. They were in good standing and would not have been dropped.

We need more covers, folks. I have a cover for the next ish but for none after that. I know that there are some frustrated ~~of/some/who/should/be~~ artists out there in the apa. So get your pens out and start drawing. Remember (as I forgot) that covers count against your minac.

Rod, you didn't meet the copy count for this ish. It's 35. The normal procedure is to charge your account for the cost of duplicating your zines for the extra copies. However, since our membership falls far short of 35 I'll let it go this time. All of you are not blameless.

Higgins, I'll try to do your zine over so that it is a bit more readable. The problem is that, in order to get the best and darkest copy possible, a lot of fluid is deposited on the paper. But it doesn't cause the ink to bleed through for a few hours, so the pages look perfect right after they're run. But blame Tullio, not me. He's the ditto master of this house. (Don't blame him too much. He reran your zine and though it's a little light, it's infinitely more readable. Also, I discovered in running of my stencils that they bled too. When I compared that paper with paper that I ran the first Times off on the lat- was a lot thicker. So Paper Point is selling us cheaper paper. We'll shop around and try to find a better brand.)

Enough of a tirade for this month. I'm really sorry for the tardiness of this ish. Next month's will be more prompt. Just a remainder-- the deadline for APA-TECH #6 is April 7 or MiniCon weekend, if you can go (get your one shots ready, mark, get set, go!) Happy teching and see you again in (gulp) a month?



...WHERE NO DRAIN CLEANER HAS TAKEN YOU BEFORE

being a journal of complex,
imaginary, and irrational studies

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Gregory Ruffa, Department Head
and Typewriter Serviceman

11 January 1980 for APA-TECH 5₁₀

This issue of QS is being released from my folks' house, to which I am currently moving my wordly goods and at which I shall be residing (briefly, I hope) until employment and I encounter one another. I imagine, though, that by the time APA-TECH 110₂ makes its way into your expectant hands, I will have a stable address once more. Meanwhile, the Center for Spaced Research is being crated up and awaits the preparation of its new site.

* * *

I'm going to go straight to the movie reviews, since they will be brief. My logo this month constitutes my main comment on a certain film released in December (I sat for two hours and watched my three bucks spiral into the hole.) It's stuff like this from that studio which reminds me that Uncle Walt really is dead. The one thing they did do right (which no other film set in interstellar space does) was to recall that there is negligible ambient light in deep space, so ships are seen only as silhouettes when you get close enough. Otherwise, these clods managed to come as close to H.G. Wells' Shape of Things to Come (1979) as one can on a huge budget. Behavior of the "characters" is utterly inexplicable: anyone over the age of five will be baffled by the number of about-faces this "story" makes. I think we can really be spared any more films with BSG-style shoot-outs (where it is clear that the "evil" robots have been rigorously drilled at the Cylon Weapons Training Center) or with CUTE ROBOTS® (desist!). The anxiously awaited descent into the maelstrom (why do so many things in this picture remind me of Disney's far superior Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea?) is a total failure - if they had ripped off the 2001 "light show" sequence, I'd have been less angry. Kiss this one off, kiddies! (I was amused to note that all the big boffo advertisements for this had already vanished from New York papers by Christmas time: the money-grubbing bureaucrats in Los Angeles are probably completely baffled ...)

STAR TREK: THE ANTI-CAVITY TOOTHPASTE is still thriving, perhaps deservedly. I've gone to see it twice now: once in Champaign's own Thimble Theaters with the elegant cinder-block walls, the exit sign that illuminates one corner of the screen, and the Dixie cup - and - string sound system and again in a Nujoizee cinema with rather more sumptuous accomodations and Dolby. No

question about it: see it in Stereo! I'm going to refrain from a detailed review here -- I have nothing additional to say that I haven't already read in print or on PLATO. I think it's nice to have a science fiction movie without a shoot-'em-up in it again. The story does emphasize the importance of intelligent reaction; unfortunately, the inner psychological conflicts that would arise are scarcely brought out. I'm quite intrigued by the script that Ellison wrote (which, as usual, was unacceptable to the executives); maybe someday he'll make it into the movies... On television, we are being barraged with commercials for STAR TREK: THE MCDONALDSLAND MEAL (the human dyspepsia is just beginning?) -- deliver me!!

For you space opera lovers (OK, OK, I did see Star Wars 15 times), a trailer for The Empire Strikes Back was shown before "Disney's" Christmas turkey and STAR TREK: Lucas' latest looks REALLY good. I'd like to see him make a non-Star Wars picture again, though.

The Adler Planetarium optical shop sent Lucas a telescope of their own manufacture, along with instructions, according to a little article in the October Sky and Telescope. A member of the staff, reading the novelization, came across the passage where Luke is looking at the stars through his macrobinoculars, as he didn't have a telescope of his own. Deciding that this was a reference by the author to himself, the Adler telescope maker organized the project and shipped the 10" reflecting 'scope to Lucasfilm. Ol' George was rather delighted -- sent the Adler \$3000, too.

* * *

"I want to sleep the sleep of Apples..." As I make ready to depart the American heartland, among the numerous loose ends I leave trailing here is my long-suffering videotape project. To summarize the current status of my work without passing the anguish along to you, two problems have at last been pinpointed. First, we learned the hard way that the Apple's power supply lacks sufficient capacitance to tolerate a drop in voltage. Such a "dip" may cause your Apple to become dizzy or befuddled, whereupon it may lose its memory or its mind or any combination thereof. We suspect this explains some of its quirky behavior which I have described earlier. It appears that the problem is quite localized: only certain University buildings have lower-than-regulation voltage; the problem is worsened when a lot of other electrical equipment in those buildings is also operating. The Education Department, the University, and Illinois Power are trying to do something about this... The other problem is that the video output signal from an Apple was never designed with video tape recorders in mind. The video technicians at Instructional Television (WILL-TV) tried all manner of machinations for me, none of which could lock onto the "color" portion of the signal. The signal lacks "equalizer pulses" (don't ask me: I'm an astronomer, I think...) and the "shape" of the "burst" is not correct for a VTR. Apparently, a television set is dumb enough to be fooled by this, however, and that's all the Apple folks care about right now. Someone is supposed to be working up a suitable video interface circuit... I impatiently await it!

* * *

As previously threatened, I plundered the Astronomy Department's "Instructional Materials Cabinet" for the recording of Kepler's "Harmony of the World". It is certainly not great entertainment: it is, after all, supposed to be an aural realization of the music in the mind of the Creator. It does nicely provide a sense of the dynamics of our solar system. The balance between the individual planetary melodic lines is not particularly well thought out, unfortunately: that stentorian Jovian foghorn tends to drown out the Cytherean and Tellurian pipsqueaks. It is worthwhile to play with the speeds on the phonograph to alter the flow of celestial time, allowing one to bring out the relationships of the inner or outer solar system alternately. I made a cassette of the record (much as I like Sky Publications, I ain't forking over any \$11 ...); should we cross paths, I'll be happy to play it for you.

There have been articles of recent date (Sky and Telescope: November 1975; Mercury: May/June 1977, November/December 1979) detailing all manner of astronomical music. Much of it is out of print presently or available only on foreign labels. I have culled from the July 1979 Schwann catalog those recordings which are supposed to be currently available (ever hear of the "Grenadilla" label??). I wrote this originally as an update for Sky and Telescope, but they bounced it back to me, saying that they were unable to find a suitable place to print it. I may as well make use of it someplace... see the following page.

* * *

I've been talking a lot about places to look for "them" now and again: I feel it only fair to reveal my sources of some inspiration (some of the things I've been saying haven't been printed anywhere else, perhaps with good reason...). The bibliography I am tossing in, at no additional cost to you, is an item I have been expanding and revising for the last four years as a handout at the occasional talks I have given on this subject in Chambana. This list contains what I consider the more responsible books on matters extraterrestrial; I have found them comprehensive and comprehensible. While a few of the authors, such as Ridpath, tend to overstate their cases (we don't really know anything about this topic), these books do make intelligent statements of viewpoint.

I have categorized the books according to approach. The first group of books are for interested readers who don't know a lot of astronomy (like what a G2V star is). The second set is for folks who do know what a G2V star is or who know what really makes a radio telescope work; techies will especially like the NASA document, recently reprinted by Dover. The next bunch includes books which were among the first to come out and talk about "them" in a rigorous fashion: they're old, but they're still good! Lastly, we have some books where one or more folks sit down at the typewriter, the table, or the auditorium and talk it over. Find out in Christian's book what Leonard Nimoy and Ray Bradbury have to say about all this. And, of course, Dr. Carl is always interesting and entertaining! (see page 5)

* * *

Benson, Warren	Star-Edge	Golden Crest S-6001
Chavez, Carlos	The Four Suns (1926)	Columbia M-32685
Crumb, George	Makrokosmos Vol. 1 (1972)	Nonesuch 71293
	Makrokosmos Vol. 2 (1973)	Odyssey Y-34135
	Music for a Summer Evening (Makrokosmos III) (1974)	Nonesuch 71311
	Night of the Four Moons (1971)	Columbia M-32739
Dlugoszewski, Lucia	Space is a Diamond	Nonesuch 71275
Holst, Gustav	The Planets (1914-16)	16 recordings
Hovhaness, Alan	Saturn	Poseidon S-1010
Kim, Earl	Earthlight	New World 237
Layman, Pamela	Gravitation I (1974)	Grenadilla 1032
Orff, Carl	Der Mond (1937-38)	Phillips 6700083
Partch, Harry	Castor & Pollux	Columbia MS-7207
Pinkham, Daniel	Signs of the Zodiac (1964)	Louisville S-673
	Toccatas for the Vault of Heaven (1972)	Golden Crest/N.E. Conservatory 114
Quintanar, Hector	Sideral II (1969)	Louisville 714
Roy, Klaus George	St. Francis's Canticle of the Sun (1951)	CRI S-182
Ruggles, Carl	Sun-Treader (1932)	DG 2530048
Russell, George H.	Encounter Near Venus (ballet) (1975)	TownHall S-17
Samuel, Gerhard	Sun-Like (1975)	Orion 78302
Schubel, Max	Moonwave (1969)	Opus One 14
Scriabin, Alexander	Universe	Melodiya/Angel S-40260
Sculthorpe, Peter	Sun Music III (1967)	Louisville 735
Smit, Leo	Copernicus - Narrative and Credo (1973)	Desto 7178
Stockhausen, Karlheinz	Ylem (1973)	DG 2530442
Strandberg, Newton	Sea of Tranquility (1969)	Opus One 21
Stravinsky, Igor	King of the Stars (cantata) (1911)	DG 2530252
ELECTRONIC MUSIC		
Beyer	Music of the Spheres	1750 Arch 1765
Charles Dodge	The Earth's Magnetic Field	Nonesuch 71250
Otto Luening	Moonflight	Desto 6466
McClellan	Music of the Spheres	CRI S-382
Vaclav Nelhybel	Outer Space Music	Folkways 33440
Smiley	Eclipse	Finnadar 9010
Morton Subotnick	Silver Apples of the Moon	Nonesuch 71174
Tomita	Kosmos	RCA ARL 1-2616

INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE

a selective bibliography

I. No previous experience necessary

- Asimov, Isaac, Extraterrestrial Civilizations (New York, 1979: Crown Publishers, Inc.)
- Bracewell, Ronald N., The Galactic Club (San Francisco, 1974: W.H. Freeman and Co.)
- Cade, C. Maxwell, Other Worlds than Ours (New York, 1967: Taplinger Publishing Co.)
- Edelson, Edward, Who Goes There? (Garden City, N.Y., 1979: Doubleday and Co., Inc.)
- Macvey, John W., Whispers from Space (New York, 1973: Macmillan Publishing Co.)
- U.S. Library of Congress, The Possibility of Intelligent Life Elsewhere in the Universe (Washington, D.C., 1975: U.S. Government Printing Office)

II. Somewhat more technical

- MacGowan, Roger A. and Ordway, Frederick I., III, Intelligence in the Universe (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966: Prentice-Hall, Inc.)
- NASA (Phillip Morrison, John Billingham and John Wolfe, eds.), The Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (New York, 1979: Dover Publications, Inc.)
- Ponnamperna, Cyril and Cameron, A.G.W., eds., Interstellar Communication: Scientific Perspectives (Boston, 1974: Houghton-Mifflin Co.)
- Ridpath, Ian, Messages from the Stars (New York, 1978: Harper and Row, Publishers)

III. The Classics

- Cameron, A.G.W., ed., Interstellar Communication (New York, 1963: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.)
- Dole, Stephen H., Habitable Planets for Man, 2nd ed., (New York, 1970: American Elsevier Publishing Co.)
- Shklovskii, I.S. and Sagan, Carl, Intelligent Life in the Universe (New York, 1966: Dell Publishing Co., Inc.)
- Sullivan, Walter, We Are Not Alone (New York, 1964: McGraw-Hill Book Co.)

IV. Just for Fun

- Berendzen, Richard, ed., Life Beyond Earth and the Mind of Man (NASA SP-328) (Washington, D.C., 1973: NASA Scientific and Technical Information Office)
- Christian, James L., ed., Extraterrestrial Intelligence: The First Encounter (Buffalo, N.Y., 1976: Prometheus Books)
- Sagan, Carl, ed., Communication with Extraterrestrial Intelligence (Cambridge, Mass., 1973: MIT Press)
- Sagan, Carl, The Cosmic Connection (Garden City, N.Y., 1973: Anchor Press - Doubleday)
- Sagan, Carl, The Dragons of Eden (New York, 1977: Random House)

I trust you techies have been watching a fine PBS series on the history of technology, entitled Connections. The thesis of its author, James Burke, is that inventions are not usually the result of inevitable linear historical progression, but are often due to obscure and diverse cultural influences, seemingly unrelated innovations in other fields, or sometimes even accident and "dumb luck". The television program is in ten parts and is easily worth an hour's viewing a week. As with several other PBS series, e.g., The Ascent of Man or The Age of Uncertainty, this program has been distilled into a book. If you don't want to shell out the hardcover price (quite understandable, these days), pester your library for a copy.

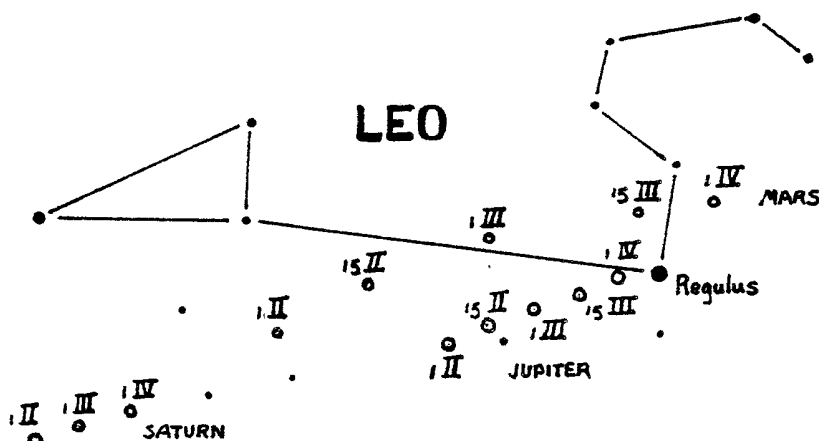
While I'm speaking of PBS, Carl Sagan's upcoming PBS series (was it not inevitable?), to be titled Cosmos, is expected for this autumn. It too promises to be worth your while (for examples of his presentation style, I refer you to back issues of The Tonight Show).

* * *

If you've ever wanted to build and fly your very own starship, have we got a book for you! The British Interplanetary Society has recently published the final report of their study, Project Daedalus. Since the Engineering Library here subscribes to the Journal of the BIS, I was able to con them into buying a copy of the book. It appears to be a compendium of articles on all aspects of the plans for an unmanned flyby mission to Barnard's Star (about six light-years distant and about 40 years of flight-time). Why they want to go there when: 1) Alpha Centauri is two light-years closer; 2) Alpha Centauri is their first choice also; and 3) the evidence for planets around Barnard's Star is inconclusive (as I mentioned in QS3) entirely escape me. But I haven't read the book cover-to-cover either. In all, it looks to be a thorough look at the problems of interstellar travel.

* * *

There won't be any elaborate celestial investigations this time around (aren't you relieved?), since I will make up for it next issue (including a technical-looking cover for APA-TECH). Besides, it's 46° outside and there's a dandy electrical storm on right now; with the Cosmic Balance so obviously out of kilter, an up-to-the-elbows astronomical inquiry doesn't seem quite proper. Will you settle for a map of where to find some planets while I move on to some comments on issues past?

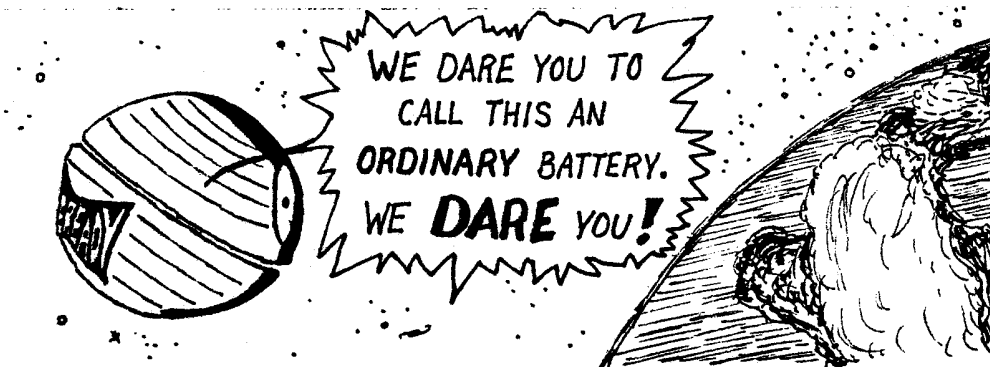


Be sure to watch for Venus, high to the southwest, at sunset; you can't miss it! Over the next few months, it will get still brighter and shift progressively toward due west at sunset. You don't have to stay up so late to see Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn now: they are well up into the eastern sky by 10 PM presently and will be plainly visible there at sunset by April 1.

* * *

POLES OF ORDER 1 -

ROOM IN THE CELLAR: I enjoyed your little battery commercial.
(APA-TECH 1)



O.D. LENS MAN (APA-TECH 3): Now that I have contracted the distance to my record collection from 1000 miles to 1000 millimeters, I can mention a few items in my possession which are somewhat in the same vein as those you mentioned.

Morton Subotnick -

Silver Apples of the Moon (Nonesuch 71174)
Sidewinder (Columbia M-30683)
Touch (Columbia MS 7316)
Until Spring (Odyssey Y-34158)

Subotnick may well be one of the premier composers of electronic music today. Silver Apples is not such a strong composition, but it was one of his first and he just seems to get better and better with each new work. Touch, to my mind, is unquestionably a masterpiece of this genre.

Harry Partch -

The Music of Harry Partch (Columbia MS 7207)
And On The Seventh Day Petals Fell in Petaluma (CRI SD 213)
The Bewitched (CRI SD 304)

Here is a man who took a complete departure from Western musical tradition and consequently was just about completely ignored by the mainstream. Partch worked with a 43-tone-to-the-octave scale, instruments fashioned from castoffs such as artillery shell casings, cloud chamber bowls, and the like, and required instrumentalists who could also dance gracefully.

Music of... is a good introductory anthology to Partch's musical theory, instruments, and compositions. The Bewitched is an extended satire attacking conformist thinking in music and other human endeavors.

Edgar Varèse -

The Varèse Album (Columbia MG 31078)

Varèse is Mr. Musique Concrete; he was in large part responsible for the introduction of purely percussive sound as a valid concept in twentieth-century musical practice. The Album contains a number of his major compositions, including the renowned Ionisation and Density 21.5 for solo flute.

Conlon Nancarrow -

Studies for Player Piano, Vol. 1 (1750 Arch 1768)

This American-born composer is almost totally unheard-of since he is now a Mexican citizen and works out of Mexico City. It seems he fought on what turned out to be the "wrong" side in the Spanish Civil War and ran into political difficulties when he returned to the States. As a composer, he became interested in the concept of the "player piano" and chose to explore and extend its potential by punching piano rolls of his own devising. This record includes his "Boogie Woogie" etudes, two of which proceed at a blistering pace and are quite overwhelming.

HUMOR AND MADNESS -

Bonzo Dog Doo-dah Band: Gorilla (Imperial LP-12370)
 Bob and Ray: The Two and Only (Columbia S-30412)
 Vintage Bob and Ray (Genesis GS 1047)
 P.D.Q. Bach: The Worst of... (Vanguard VSD 719/20)
 Peter Cook and Dudley Moore: Good Evening (Island 9298)
 Anna Russell: The Anna Russell Album? (Columbia MG 31199)
 The Firesign Theater: just about all of it

Bonzo Dog is fond of lampooning all manner of popular musical styles; the Dixieland jazz number is priceless (the band sounds just great together, until you hit the solos ...). Bob and Ray have specialized in gentle, ridiculous humor on radio and on the Broadway stage for some eons now. The remarkable thing about P.D.Q. Bach (Peter Schickele) is that his humor is quite accessible to folks who know relatively little about "classical" music (but the more you know, the worse it gets...). Before Dudley Moore was rating people, he and Peter Cook appeared in several movies together, including The Wrong Box and The Bed Sitting Room, a tremendous, typically British comedy about what it was like after the Bomb; this record contains portions of their Broadway show. Anna Russell

demolishes all the traditions of operatic performance; if you hate opera (or even like it), this is for you; her 20-minute synopsis of Wagner's Ring cycle and her do-it-yourself Gilbert and Sullivan operetta are classics. The Firesign Theatre are either attacking the mores of the "older generation" or the posturing that was all too common in the Sixties (I've never been sure which); How Can You Be in Two Places at Once..., I Think We're All Bozos On This Bus, and Everything You Know Is Wrong are their best productions, in my opinion.

Whooph, enough ancient issues! Let's get caught up to last month!

MORE POLES OF ORDER 1 (APA-TECH 4) -

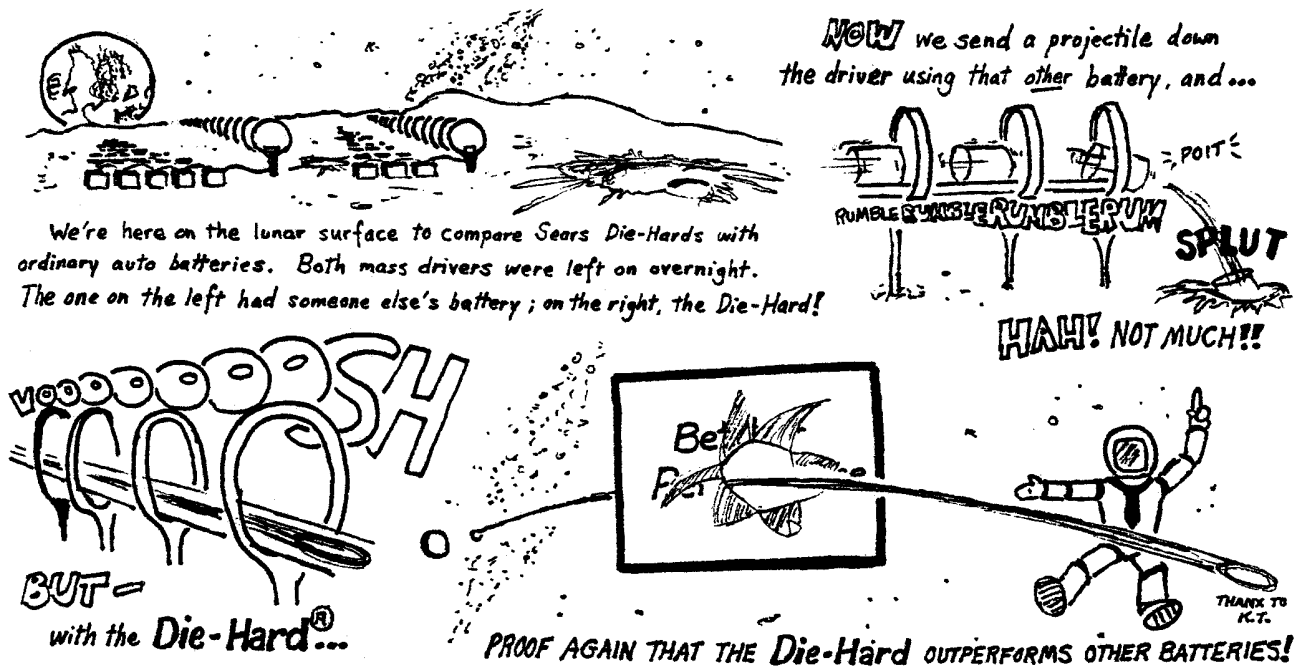
THE COVER: Right, I got it. An old NASA planetary probe, the Sestak V-8, drops into an Einstein-Rosen bridge and pops up near a world entirely inhabited by techies, fanzine editors, and other potentially dangerous creatures. Then...

THE 555 TIMES: I fear you are confirming my worst fears about the bloodlust of Editors. I wouldn't worry about the size of this monstrosity: it already takes me two hours to read through... Thanks for sending along #1; I now feel all caught up. (By the way, where do you guys know William Patrick Typographers from? My father has used them for ages and they seem like old friends.) As I've said before, the name APA-TECH sounds just fine to me.

SINGULARITY, TOO: Well, I read through the article by Kolm, et al. Mind you, at present, I am a real "dimbulb" where electronics is concerned, but somehow the railgun designs sounded like the most approachable for your effort. Two problems concern me the most (apart from the need for superconductors and sophisticated timing). One is that all of these designs seem to require very exacting tolerances in the construction of the launch "barrel"; a little kink somewhere would be a disaster. The other difficulty is the average power requirement. Accelerating a body from rest to a final velocity, v , over a distance, s , requiring imparting to it a kinetic energy of $\frac{1}{2}mv^2$ in a time interval of $(2s/v)$, since $s = \frac{1}{2}at^2$ and $v = at$, so $s = \frac{1}{2}vt$. The average power needed is:

$$\bar{P} = (\frac{1}{2}mv^2)/(2s/v) = \frac{1}{4}mv^3/s \text{ Watts, where mks units are used.}$$

The Canberra work of accelerating a 16 gm projectile to 5.9 km/sec over a distance of 5 m requires an average power of 164 MW. The colorful description of accelerating the same projectile to 250 km/sec over 12.5 km requires an average power of 5 GW (albeit only for a tenth of a second). Even boosting the same projectile to Mach 1 (≈ 340 m/sec) over 5 m takes an average of about 31.4 kW. I guess what I'm asking is: whose wall socket are you plugging this into? (I mentioned all of this to Keith already. He told me you'd be using auto batteries, which suggested the following...)



I don't intend to sound defeatist; I'm just curious as to how these matters might be circumvented (as that modern sage, Roseann Rosannadanna would say, he sure asks a lot of questions for someone from New Jersey). If you'd like me to help with literature searches or suchlike, let me know...

Ah, the naming of cats is a strange business. My sister's cat is a typical striped tabby with a prominent "M" on its forehead. My sister decided (naturally) that the "M" stood for Mars, so the cat became "Martian" (but what is the name known but to itself?). I was visiting a married couple of my acquaintance in Boston just after they'd acquired a kitten. We found a small bell to use as a toy, which seemed to capture its attention. Soon we put it on a ribbon and decided to "bell the cat". They decided that would be a good name: "Bell, the Cat" (you know, like STAR TREK: THE FREEZE-DRIED COFFEE). They have since bought another cat, which they named (of course) "Whistle".

Sky and Telescope occasionally features a section on astronomical arts and crafts; either the November or December issue showed some examples of stained glass work. You may find inspirations therein; they would probably also appreciate a photo of your birthday present.

WESTECH: My experience is that the electronic net is most successful if you can restrict the membership. One of the reasons I stopped reading the "notesfiles" on PLATO (which work similarly) is that anyone could sign on and add just any sort of drivel. I don't mean to impose some elitist restriction; it's just that I can do without the "What do you know, anyhow; you're an idiot!"-"Oh yeah, well, you're a ..." sort of exchanges that clutter memory. Maybe the cost will cause folks to chose their words with care. (So how come this bozo's at the bottom of page 10?)

SYNCOATED BANDERSNATCH: Gosh, I always wondered how you came by that healthy, vigorous glow...

I've said enough about mass drivers for now (see my comments above). What say ye?

Hmmph... I'm surprised the Alien didn't appear on the scene singing "chow chow chow"...

ChUSFA expects to get a bigger room for the Library when the proposed new wing of the Illini Union is added; I believe this is timed to coincide with the first manned landing on Saturn. Meanwhile, the collection swells to and soon surpasses 6000 items...

STILL MORE POLES OF ORDER 1 (APA-TECH 4.5) -

p₂ : I enjoyed the puzzle. I found all the words. So how come I got 23 letters left over? Incidentally, in the square, you didn't go and spell "fanac" with two "N"s, did you?

WELL-ADJUSTED MUBETAN: Ah, well, that makes the story much clearer (!?). Do you plan to run some more installments?

POLES OF ORDER 2 -

SINGULARITY, TOO: I visited Synchroni City once, but they tossed me out. I'm usually late for things, and everything there has to go off like clockwork. Are you sure you don't mean "serendipity"?

It may well be that you've never seen a derivation in an APA, but then I've never before seen an APA written by engineers and scientists (or facsimiles thereof). Such fun!

SMITH'S AURA: I met the gentleman working with the 24 Apples in Springfield again last week; it seems, in this case, that they do want a computer lab where each student can have a private computer. However, it is typical that about one-third of the Apples are "down" at any given moment. I agree that "computer illiteracy" is a very great problem with many decision-makers. For example, I wonder if the State of Minnesota really needs every one of the 600 Apples they just bought?

SYNCOATED BANDERSNATCH: I hauled out my copy of The Scientist Speculates: An Anthology of Partly-Baked Ideas and read Clarke's little article, "Trouble in Aquila, and Other Astronomical Brainstorms". I'm afraid the bit about the novae in Aquila constitutes only a light drizzle. I have great respect for Clarke usually, but this time the man didn't do his homework. It is true that the region he describes is only 0.25% of the sky, but his sample is very biased. The band of the Milky Way averages maybe 15° in width; this is only about 12% of the sky. Moreover, about 90% of all the stars in the Galactic disk would be seen from here to lie in a segment about 40° wide in the Galactic band. So, about 90% of all Galactic stars could be seen in a patch comprising about 1.3% of the sky (were it not for interstellar absorption). The area of Aquila in question does lie only 30° from the direction of the

Galactic center. I'm surprised he didn't look still closer to the nucleus. 1936 was a busy year: besides the two novae in Aquila, there were three in Sagittarius, and a flare-up of a recurrent nova in Scorpius. There were also three novae in 1950 and two more in 1952 all in a fairly small region in Scorpius. But then, the Galactic nucleus is a busy place. I'll say more about that next time.

DR. GONZO'S: If you're asking me about the TV sets they're using in Springfield, I couldn't tell you; I didn't think to ask. We've been using a Sharp here, but I have to agree that the color graphics looked a lot better on the Sony Trinitron monitor we used with the video tape recorder.

P2 : A competition for 'zine length?!? Whatever makes you say THAT?? It must be your imagination, he said somewhere on his twelfth page...

CHARMED: Will the puns stop?? No, never, not even if you try to break me on Dirac!!

* * *

Well, all of this certainly ran on a bit. I think things will simmer down for a while now, unless I think of something important to say...

Attention, all Moosehats! Coslow's, a fine little sandwich shoppe on John Street in Champaign, near Campustown, now offers Moosehead beer. So when you hit town for Whatcon, don yer antlers and check it out.

PBS at last aired its presentation of LeGuin's "Lathe of Heaven", which appeared as a two-hour movie. I don't believe I've read anything by LeGuin, so I'll have to comment on the film as a separate work. My feeling is that the story seemed properly paced for two hours; there were a few points I'd have liked developed more fully, but that might have made things drag. The visual effects looked good, at least on my 5" black-and-white set. I am a mite puzzled as to whether the ending is intended to be as fuzzy as it was presented. The owner of a bookstore here who knows I'm in ChUSFA asked me if the ending is still within Orr's dream; I feel that it doesn't really matter, since there's no way you could ever decide. This sort of ambivalence as to whether we are in real reality or dream reality has also been treated effectively in some of Dick's stories and Lem's "Futurological Congress". I'm not going to stir up those waters here; I'm going to say "be reading you!"



Dr. Gonzo's Interim Eclectica

December/January, 1979-80

Copyright (C) by Valli M. Hoski

[Valli Hoski, residing at 621 Hull Terrace, #1W, Evanston IL 60202]
(and still no waterbed or cat)

This being an intermediate collection of reviews, new news and no news in the interim period between ApoTech IV and V, I submit this document for your perusal, discourse and perhaps boredom.

These past few weeks I have been witness to a plethora of movies and books, more so than usual. Perhaps this strange occurrence is due to a lull in con activity, this being that great and glorious season of snow (for the sadistic, hot-blooded and otherwise insane lover of ice and cold). Whatever the perverse gods design, however, I seek to amuse myself with the most pleasurable means conveniently available. So books and movies have been consumed, digested and are now recollected/reniniscid/reviewed for your pleasure:

>>>> Celluloid Kisses <<<<

Star Trek: The Movie -- Well, in the Sun-Times, the title keeps changing, so that now it is Star Trek: The Experience. What can I say except maybe they will get it right with Star Trek: The John Dykstra Show. Pretty lights and nice effects aside, why pay \$4.00 for a rehash of every plot detail that ever existed on alien life forms, Kirk vs. Spock vs. Bones temperaments, and once again, the engines canna take it. The oooh and aaah quality of special effects out there in space is beginning to wear thin, and the rehashing of the old Kirk-Spock-Bones triumvirate doesn't do much to hold suspense for 2 and a half hours. One more time the engines canna take it (nor I). But it was nice to see the crew again.

=====

1941 A thoroughly absurd way to spend a Friday night. Whether the absurdity came from my exhaustion (it was a helluva week) or the exhaustion of my friends (Dick Smith, Doug Van Dorn, Gretchen Van Dorn, and other assorted) who were on the floor, I am not sure. But was Spielberg satirizing the Viper chase-down-the-narrow-gorge-walls with Belucci's chase-down-the-narrow-LA-walls, well, ask the Techies that were there.....But even the good guy gets the girl, and EVERYONE (and probably their mother) gets a credit line.....

***** ++ *****

Black Hole Another thoroughly absurd way to spend a Friday night. But exactly how absurd depends on how desperate one is to be entertained. Seems to be border-line s.f., with only the location conveniently labelling it s.f. Would it still be s.f. if it had been in Davy Jones' locker instead of Lazarus Long territory (or 6000000 leagues under instead of 6000000 leagues over?) The technical subject of the film is psuedo-scientific, but the characters and action all are a rehash of every Captain Nemo adventure you would ever want to see.....

Sigh. Disney studios should just stick to the animation, that is their good stuff....ALTHOUGH I will admit (sheepishly??) that the final 'heaven in hell/botton of the black hole' had me subliminally terrified and clinging to the person sitting next to me....such is the stuff of childhood nightmares. Too close for comfort, but then again the person sitting next to me loved it (cling, cling). So judgment lies verdictless. Go spend your \$\$ at a matinee, it's worth that.

]]]] Linear Singularities []]]]

Tales of Known Space: the Universe of Larry Niven

This is my first encounter with any of the Known Space series, other than Ringworld, and I am befuddled as to the quality of some of the stories. I prefer more conciseness of structure and for some dynamic event to occur in the course of a story, or at least for SOMETHING to happen, but the first stories have left me wondering....is that all there is? The Coldest Place, left me cold, wondering where the rest of the story had gone; Becalmed in Hell and Wait It Out and Eye of an Octopus justified themselves in the reading; How the Heroes Die, At the Botton of the Hole, and Intent to Deceive, I am still mulling over. Perhaps my expectations are too high. Or Niven too ambiguous.

The World of Ptolemy Alright, so Niven is vindicated in this tale from Known Space. I found it surprising that a work which centered so monogonously around a central character as this one did could carry itself off so well. And I finally found mention of what the world a bandersnatch was supposed to be, so now Bill Higgins' cartoons finally are appreciated by my infantile knowledge of Niven. (Please be charitable folks and try not to laugh too hard, ok??)

A Gift From Earth Forgive a possible heresy, but Matthew Keller does remind me of little Jonny Cross from Van Vogt. It sure is nice to know that someone can make heroes, even if they are from moldy-oldies, but still spiffy sciffies. I found all the characters intriguing, and the situation worth reading along for. Just a gripe about Niven. Why did he have to make the control that Keller will presumably have over the will of women so obviously sexist in the last chapter?? Sheesh, if I ever encountered Keller in a dark alley, I would run for the void....and that is no way to win a lady, I can tell you for sure....hnph.

Slam A. E. Van Vogt Thank you, Dick, for adding to the education of this fan. I had not encountered this tale before, and felt wholly justified in reading it upon its completion. Not like the stories above, which left me unsettled and in search of an ending, Van Vogt tantalized, suspended, and then rewarded me for my efforts. From various sources I have been informed that this is one of those Classics of S.F. that is revered, honored, etc. Well, I actually went out and bought a copy for my revered, honored, etc. shelf and that speaks well enough of it from me.

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The Endless Frontier Jerry Pournelle (ed.) Congratulations, Bill, on getting Pournelle to pay you, if your tale is true.....
Actually, not a bad book, considering it hit the 'Walgreen's, Osco, Cunningham's' circuit (for you non-midwest types, those are Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan drugstore chains, respectively) But I was pleasantly surprised to finally discover a factual account of Trojan points, L4 and L5 and all that other information that I have always needed to make my life as a techie complete. Recommended for general knowledge, and some of the stories are even worth it.

Onto the Chicago cold, December holidays, 1980 and Confusion.....
one addendum.....heated water beds have got to be one of the better ways of keeping warm in winter any other solutions to the cold??

1980

Well, Whedaya Know, the Snow Finally Came....and its Entropy

Well, *sigh* it is indeed winter in the Windicity....2 to 3 inches of that gorgeous but deadly stuff up here north, by the lake. Funny consistency of the stuff though that I noticed while fluffing the snow off my car this morning....more like styrofoam beads than snow. Guess it was more like tiny ice pellets with snow frosting than actual HUGE flakes....but it all turned to mush and/or ice anyway....the entropy of a snowflake?

What I Did on my Christmas vacation, in 100 words or more....

[But first, this Public Service Announcement:

Now, you can save the soul of this degenerate fan by sending the address of the any establishment in Chicago that serves (for a fee or otherwise) decent hot cider or buttered run (or a reasonable facsimile thereof).....

ACT NOW!! Only you can help discover a cure (which is presently undiscovered) for this fan's cravings and desires....]

December 22.....actually on the train after first, second and third thoughts on whether I would actually make it.....so this is Christmas, huh?.....somehow the magic is a little gone when you arrive home to discover that your parent has somehow not been able to conjure up something for a Christmas present (but I thought parents are supposed to know EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THEIR LITTLE DARLINGS!) and so it is off to find an appropriate briefcase to put under the tree.....I wonder if Christmas will only regain its magic for me when I have my own children....*sigh*.....

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what ensues is a week of supposed "rest" with me tagging along on shopping expeditions for groceries, presents, and other assorted travels that burns up as much of my energy as being in Chicago.....coupled with undying doses of "concern and care" from parent which is a bit much to deal with, when it even includes informing me WHAT LANE I SHOULD BE DRIVING IN!!.....just when I am about to climb the walls and jump off the ceiling....

ISHERCON!!!!.....in spite of Antrak.....I have made it.....thanks to the ride from the station from Doug van Dorn....I am here but a particular someone else hasn't.....so it is a holding pattern until a person walks in the door of the House....and hughughug....(go ahead and get the rest of the details out of your delightfully lewd subconscious, just don't ask me to confirm or deny then!!).....and its MOVIE TIME!.....thanks Steve, for an excellent choice of Woody Allen flicks... Manhattan was an amazing surprise, and a film that I wanted to see for a long time but never did....who says that techies are not connoisseurs of the vices??.....they rolled out the barrels at St. Julian's for us, they did.....by the way, Cream D'Or and vanilla ice cream blended in an Osterizer is very nice.....hm, even managed to get a decent amount of sleep too (*sigh* its sad when the body just can't party like it used to....but thanks for entrusting the floor space of thy beloved laboratory, Alex).....and where there are techies, rockets are soon to follow.....Cap'n Al, congratulations on the SUPERB timing of your New Year's midnight boon*sigh* back to the environs of Chicago and the rest of sordid reality on Jan. 1.....but I had a great time folks, I have got to tell you, and I think you all are a super bunch oh I have got to say again that I love Colsher's singing/playing and Higgins' filking/dancing.....thanks.....anyway it is back in Chicago now and Thursday nights again until Confusion.....

Early January Mundane Blues.....*sigh*.....just trying to do work as painlessly as possible during the week, and survive until the weekend.....when it finally comes, all I do is sleep it away.....not much exciting going on, not much that I want to mention anyway.....one of the interesting diversions of the winter though, is a water-bed.....Chicago fan seem to be either acquiring or desiring to acquire one of these fantastic floating cuddly things.... hm, I actually have done my wash in preparation for a con (it almost always has to be before a con for me to motivate myself to be Suzy Homenaker).....and I will see you all at Confusion, and hopefully deliver this to Renee, so will not offer a con report, except in a possible one-shot from there.....more adventures later from the ludicrous leudies of Chicago fandon.....

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Hailing Comments (OK, you ego-scanners, I promised.....)

Singularity: Two Does anyone ever acquire a cat by purely premeditated means anyway? And the Crestview Food Town sounds exactly like the kind of place fen (at least some Chicago fen I know) will throng to at MarCon.....

Outer Darkness Welcome, and it always works to see the more optimistic side as most of us saw you at Ishercon. The funny thing about fandom is when Thursday night becomes almost every night and when the delineation between daily life and fannish life becomes very hazy....then the real crazies start. But welcome.

Smith's Corona You asked if decadence was available and what price, and I think you have found out, perhaps/probably the hard way. You already know my M.C./complaint regarding one of your paragraph titles--sometime/most of the time in the past few months, I think the HAGARIES have outweighed the rest. As for whether you made the right decision, well I.... well I.... un.... well.... gosh.... maybe California might have been easier, but I would have missed a lot of love and a lot of pain. And that is the way life has worked, isn't it??

SmithAndOtherSuch.....Notes At Large On The Subject Of Smith For The General Public.....yea, we are talking again and holding hands again and arguing again and acting-very-untechie-in-public again....and that is all I will say on that....and as for what I do....well.....hm.....can't corrupt the innocent.]

Meromorphic Melange Sigh, I am never quite sure if those nice stars I see over Lake Michigan are really planets, stars, or LIDLS

Y.A.A.:T.S.G. Speaking of strong needs for teaching people the fundamentals of how minis and micros operate....how about teaching some public school teachers how micros work/what to do with them/not to be afraid of them so that they [teachers] will actually be able to HELP and not hinder their 12 yr. old whizzes who have no fear and are programming circles around everyone else in the school.....???? Where I am presently working at National College of Education (a teacher's college), there is a TRS-80 in the laboratory grade school affiliated with the college, and several 10-12 yr. olds who are just amazing everyone with their programs...., and there is NO ONE who knows enough about the machine to be able to point these kids in the right direction BEYOND the manual!! Argh... why is it so difficult to try and teach teachers????!!!!

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Quintessential Singularity See YAAITSS note for my frustrations of computers and teachers.....but what I would like to try with an Apple II which I may be able to borrow from an agency that I am consulting for is to hook it to a videocassette recorder and videotape some color displays while the Apple is running a graphics routine.....if it works I will let you know.

Alexander's Ragtime Bandersnatch Aw, Bill, first you wou ne with your dancing and now your title.....sigh.....I think there are lots of things you are hiding under your bandersnatch- bushel-basket that are just going to wou us silly when they do!! Yesyesyes, I agree wholeheartedly with your best wishes for the D.D. Tog venture and I can only add my voice to the chorus of well-wishers.....

Off The Top Of My Head Doug, it was good to see you in print, and also to discover that you sound the same in your zine as when you talk....but what will we do in Chicago until some more films get released?? Play backgannon and eat Dunkin' Donuts all weekend long??

Clean ngs From the Dustbin #1 Good to see you too, and I am amazed at what you know, and what I didn't know about you. About the children's section of the library.....I find myself returning there occasionally to keep up on the latest releases from some decent authors, but also find a strange reassurance in some children's books where all is well.....did you ever read the 'Mushroom Planet' series?? I still envision the Mushroom Planet green as a delicate hue which I have never ever seen in reality.....

p2 Alice, glad to see that you made it, and I REALLY liked your cover!! I have also got to say that your zine was the most visually pleasing and coherent of the latest APA TECH batch.....enjoy U-I.

Tales from the Charmed Sea Keith, regarding your comments on the 'gray flannel suit'.....I know EXACTLY how I would dress if I was male....cordoroy pants, wool sweaters, muted plaids and wool sportcoats/suits.....well, I try that to a degree with my appearance, but somehow the effect just isn't the same.....I mourn the dearth of decent wool blazers for women, and lack of muted patterned shirts.....maybe I am just a reincarnated sheep (my love of virgin wool).....oh but you are amazing in your velour.....you win my vote as most cuddlingly-dressed at Ishercon....sorry if that is not the correct techie attitude.....but I offer no excuse except the basic sensual appeal of velour.....take it easy and I wish you the strength and endurance you need for late January.....take care please.

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~~~~~ Coming Attractions ~~~~~

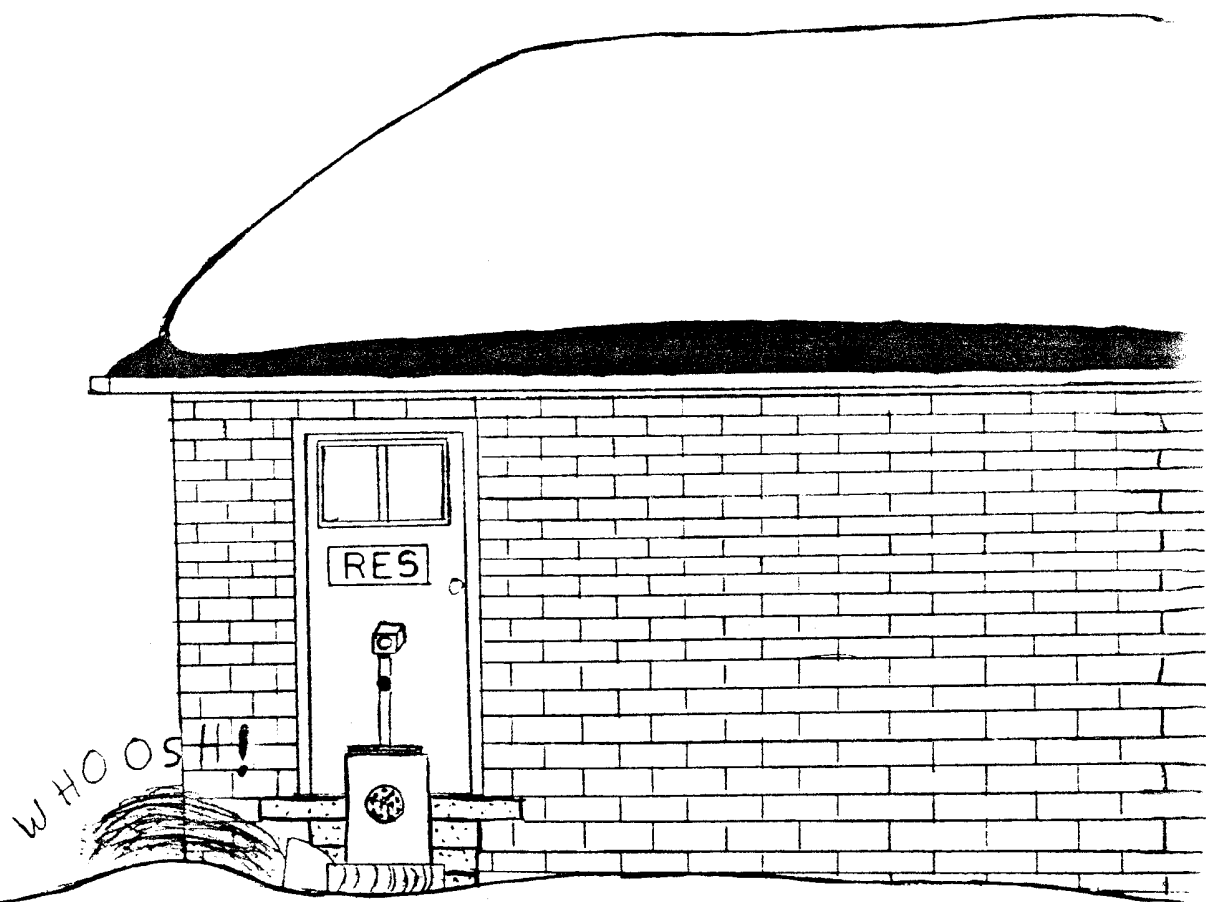
More Reviews and New Views on the Sometimes Classy Classics of Sciffy  
and more adventures from the ludicrous lewdies of Chicago fandom.....  
at Confusion and thereafter.....

THANK-YOU to Mary Lynn Skirvin, Bill Higgins, et. al. for their  
fine folk-book and all the effort that went therein. FINALLY  
I have the words to Motie Engineers!!!! (Bill Colsher can now  
forgive me for requesting it so often!!....just have to hear me  
sing it now!!)

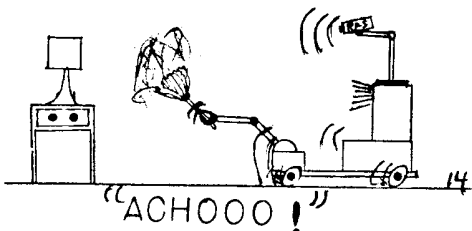
THANK-YOU to House of Isher for putting us all up, and providing  
one of the more enjoyable New Year's I have had in a while.....  
maybe even see you folks next year.....

NOTE Invaluable assistance lent, once again, by R. H. E. Smith,  
II, and the folks at Datalogics for file space, terminal and printer  
use and computer time. Acknowledgements are gratefully given.

# APA-TECH 5



WINTER WONDERLAND



## TRANSPORTER TOPICS

3

by

R. E. Smith  
922 Belvoir Dr.  
Frankfort, Ky. 40601

(Being the miscellaneous ramblings of a deranged highway engineer devoted to promoting public-participant demolition derbys on our Interstates. Sorry about missing last issue, folks. This one is a bit over-sized in recompense.)

\*Private message to Mike Sestak: Yes, I am a civil servant. My mother taught me to always be polite. I work for KyDOT. Now, anyone else who read this take fifty lashes with a strand of wet spaghetti\*

Due to the flood of requests (would you believe a total count of one?) on the photo that appeared last time, I will now reveal my source. It is a scanning electron micrograph of a crystal of lead-tin telluride, which, according to the caption, is not supposed to form crystals. It came from a book about unusual photos, which I have since lost. Some day I am going to get my room in order. This book is fascinating. There is a photo from one of the early A-bomb tests taken in the first few milli-seconds after detonation. The fireball, oddly non-symmetrical, has eaten only a third of the tower. Marv!!!

#####

About this stuff; I don't really believe the answers I give. My basic premise is that all legends have a basis in fact, and the legend of a universal flood is one of the most widespread. The main purpose of these little essays is to make the reader (tha's you) think. If someone can provide a better answer I will gladly accept it.

My sources of information are varied. Some important information on the Flood came from the book Atlantis: the Antediluvian World, by Ignatius Donnelly. Though first printed in the last century, the analyses of common cultural factors <sup>are</sup> still valid.

#####

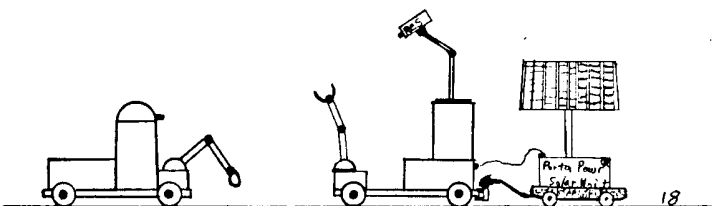
You cannot make dogs out of wolves. A number of people have raised wolves as pets, and all have found differences. Even if raised with people from pups, wolves are notoriously difficult to train. They will not return on command. They retain certain wolfish traits, not found in dogs, even after several generations of captivity. Either we have just not spent enough generations on the study, or dogs were derived from a different canine ancestor. There are wild dogs---but they may be distant descendants of abandoned pets. It seems difficult to believe that our forebearers would spend decades breeding and raising such intractable animals as wolves.

And what about dolphins? Why do they have such an interest in, and affection for, humans? For all of human history these intelligent mammals have been friends of men, despite the generations of slaughter and captivity. Why are they so faithful? Its almost like

Maybe genetic engineering?

they had been designed  
that way.

A little different stuff, here, delving into modern mysteries. The massive erosion features on Mars are quite a bit of a puzzler. Although some estimates of their age are in the multiple millions of years, others range down to as little as a hundred thousand. What's more, the period of erosion is very short, by most estimates. Therefore, there must have been a massive infusion of water, a perhaps unique event in the history of the planet. The water could be fossil, or volcanic. Either source needs a release mechanism.



No, I'm NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE ENERGY CRISIS. WHY DO YOU ASK?

Well, then, what about terraforming?  
Terraforming! Sure, take a look:

The axial tilt and rotational period of

Mars are within a few percent of Earth's. Now, one could be coincidence, but two?

To change diurnal period and tilt you bombard a world with asteroids. Use iceteroids and you also supply water. Electrolise some of the water. let the Hydrogen drift into space, and you have an atmosphere that will stay breathable for thousands of years. You also get torrential floods. Phobos and Deimos are recognised as captured asteroids. Now, Jupiter capturing asteroids is understandable, but Mars has a very shallow gravity well. The capture rate must be very low. Also, the orbits of the two moons are very unstable, which means that they are fairly young features. They are dropping rapidly towards their host, due to very close orbits. And then there are those strange features on the two worldlets; the grooves and straiations especially. Although I am not sure of the periapson and apapson figures, I believe that the orbits of the two are fairly circular, not what you would expect for captured asteroids.

With the low capture rate, asteroids must be an uncommon feature around Mars. What are the odds of humanity coming to dominion during one of those periods?

Okay, enough esoteric stuff for now.

There has recently been an administration change in the Kentucky state government. John Y. Brown, who brought you Kentucky Fried Chicken, has promised to run the commonwealth like a business..Well, I'm on the merit system, so my job should be secure. One good thing about being part of the system is anual salary increments. I get mine just in time for Christmas every year. I make good pay, and since I still live at home have a lot saved that otherwise would be spent on rent and food. A large part of my bank account will be going soon on a new car, but that still leaves a sizable portion for books, mags, and gadgets. Life's been good.....

Part of my money is going for RC modeling equipment. Progress is slow so far, since I am also studying for my Novice liscense ( and learning Japanese, and working on my Masters, and reading twenty periodicals a month...). For those of you who have not heard about modern radio control technology, let me enlighten you. The units available now have fully proportional control. Move the stick a little, the control moves a little. Move it a lot, it moves a lot.

The transmitter sends out a digital signal on one frequency. For multiple channels, each channel has an individual code ID, and has the signals sent sequentially. The receiver decodes the signals, sends the proper one to the proper servo. The servo in turn decodes the signal as part of a balanced circuit. If the circuit does not balance,

the motor is rotated until it does. Since the shaft is connected to a potentiometer (or trimmer capacitor in some designs) the bridge changes until balanced. Many companies are now putting microprocessors in their servos for greater accuracy.

## Cheap Chips Make Nifty Robot Eyes

The Case Western University Robotics Lab has developed a quick and dirty image sensor. It's almost free!!

Take a 1K dynamic RAM chip (the 4008 family is best because it's pin compatible with the 2102) and carefully pry the gold lid off the package. Be sure that you haven't inadvertently broken or shorted any of the tiny wires that connect it to the outside world. If you focus an image on the memory array, write ones into memory, and then read it, you'll find that where the light fell on the array there are zeroes in memory and where it is dark there will still be ones.

This works because of the photoelectric principle which says that as light shines on a surface it will knock off electrons. The rate at which the electrons drain off is related to the intensity of the light at that point. This principle

makes it possible to get gray scale information by just sampling a few more times and finding the bits that have changed since the last sample.

The 4008 is logically compatible to the 2102 with just two exceptions. First, it's dynamic, a property we rely on in this case. Secondly, it uses a -12 volt supply on the ground pin. You will probably want to build a sense amplifier to allow you to set the contrast (one transistor). Just hang this chip on your memory bus and write some software for all sorts of neat things: optical character recognition, for instance. Or even the eyes of a robot!

(Reprinted from the Shift Register, publication of The Cleveland Digital Group. Gary Coleman, member of CDG, is associated with the CWRU Robotics Lab.)

cy. And the accuracy is really phenominal. On my 5-channel Futaba I can get movements as small as 1/8 inch. Full travel of the servos takes about half a second. The range is line of sight, which means that as long as you can see it you can control it. Anything that can be done by rotary motion, whether move a pushrod or close a switch, can be done with a control system that would make Joe or Cosmo turn green with envy. If you want to build a robot, whether full-fledged or a drink cady, and don't want to get a degree in electronics in the process, RC equipment is an answer.

I have finally discovered why you people are so glad to do reviews: they are great for filling up space!

Singularity: Steve, I used to work in a library, and I can tell you that they are sadly underused. As to the mass driver, with all the talent available in this crazy group there is little that we can't do. I will be gald to supply moral support, if nothing else.

Outré' Drakness: Four older siblings? AAARRGH!!! At least one of them was decent enough to introduce you to fandom.

Smith's Coronary: You have my sympathies for your automotive problems. After suffering through 5 used vehicles I have finally broke(en) down and purchased a new one. It will be three years before I am again a free man. Small claims courts are free in most states, and will handle any conflict involving money below a certain amount. Check your local courthouse for details.

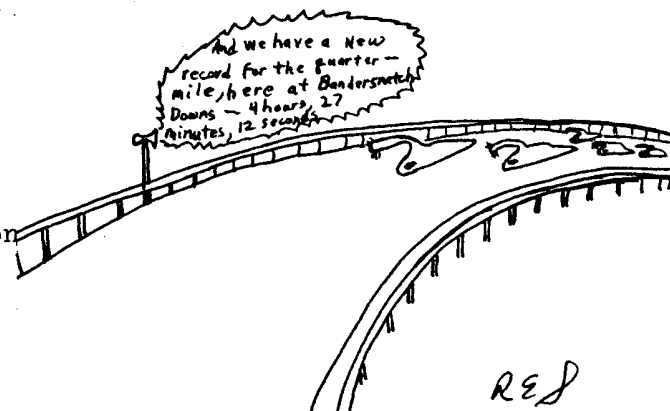
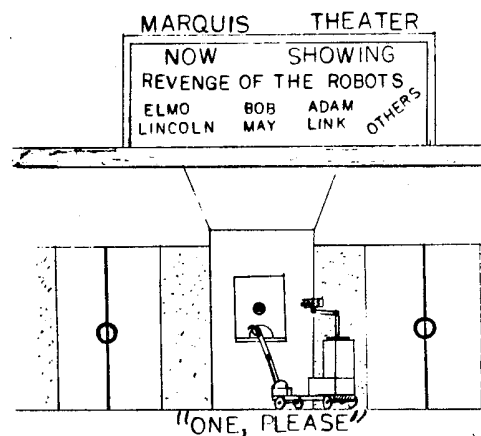
Nestecgg: We solitary members are begining to sound like a commercial for Maytag. I agree with you about ST: TMP. The plot was fair, the effects good, and the acting barely adequate. My screening was hampered by the fact that the unprintable projectionist ran the film just slightly too fast. Kirk came out talking soprano.

Megalomaniac Message: Greg, about 3 years ago I bought a booklet ("This Quarter of the Universe is Ours!") that detailed how to build 3D and 2D star maps. This included a list of all the known stars within 6 parsecs, their coordinates, and the program used to get the 3D positions from the astronomical RA and Etc. Other stars, some out as far as 1000 parsecs, are listed. Would you like a copy?

All Aboard the Solar Express: What makes you think the ice sheets are that old? Some experts believe that our techniques for measuring age may be off as much as a thousand fold. (Great! Now I'm reviewing reviews!)

The Quintessential Singularity: Burachracies (thet can't be right) tend to ignore anything that doesn't fit into their dogma. Who knows how many comets and stellar phenomina never made it into the records simply because some churchman or noble decided it wouldn't look right? There was an artical on All Things Considered about the "Music of the Spheres", which included interviews with the two men primarily responsible for the project. Did you by chance hear it? A lot of detail.

Beware the Bandersnatch: Gee, Bill, I hope you don't mind my stealing a little of your thunder. Have you tried drawing Snits? Long-term studies of Nagasaki and Hiroshima have shown that although there were more incidents of cancer and other radiation-associated diseases, the mutation rate was much lower than forecast. Apparently, the gene structure is somewhat self-repairing. Did you see that article on Fermilab and it's creator in Science 80? No familiar faces in the photos. Must be a big place, employment wise.



Goin' out of My Head: (Anybody remember that song?) It has taken the major studios over a decade to realise that people go to movies to have a good time, not to be culturally improved. Now, if only they could realise that a film can be both successful and good. Some producers and directors do, fortunately. I wondered why the local theater pulled Meteor the day it was supposed to start.

Cleaning the Dustbin: I happen to own a TRS-80. Maybe I will ask! I had heard of a commercial version of the MCA Disco-vision being used as a substitute for microfiche, but computers? Hmummm-----

Below are some photos I took at Windycon. You can see why I'm taking a photography course.



4

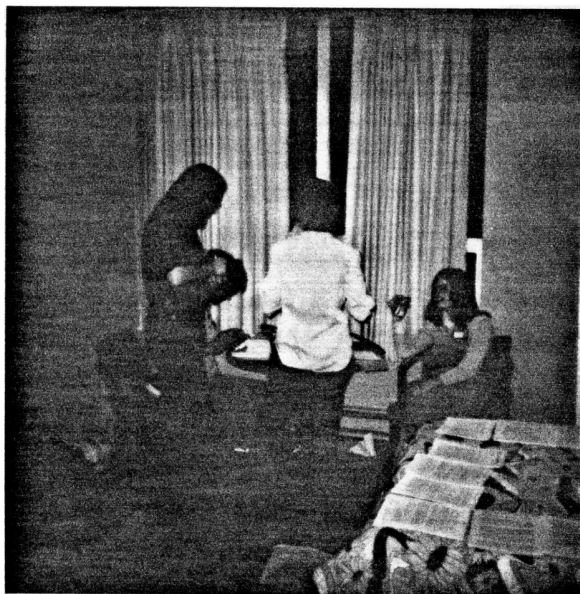


Oct 6 1979

Trying Bandersnatch? Down

Oct 6 1979

↑ The GT  
party at 10 PM



↑ The GT  
Party at  
4 AM

The Colation  
Coalition

→

Oct 6 1979  
Colation Coalition

Gill next  
time,  
Rod



## OUTER DARKNESS #2

Donna Struwe's zine, brought to you via Apa-Tech, from---  
2545 W. Winona Chicago, Il. (312)275-3428

Well, here it is February 2. The deadline was yesterday. So what else is new? Strange, I had promised myself I would have my zine finished and copied by last weekend so I could give it to Renee via Tullio, thus saving the money needed to mail it to her. It turned out that I could have even given it directly to Renee...if I had it written...which I didn't. Oh well, it was that kind of month.

Thursday night, while discussing my inability to think of something to write about, with Dick Smith, he said I should write about anything. Even something stupid (well, let's say not too bright) is usually acceptable. I tried to explain to him, that it may be acceptable for someone else, but not when I'm putting my name on it. However, in thinking it over, perhaps he's right. Besides, I don't really have anything intelligent to write about, and I did tell Renee I'd write something. So here it is---something.

One thing I would like to say to all those who were at Ishercon--thanks for helping to get the new year off to a great start. And special thanks to the House of Isher--you sure know how to throw a party.

(and now a most unoriginal title)

### Mailing Comments (told ya')

Renee--About the deadline--yes! Please still allow a weeks grace after the due date. Be kind to us poor souls who aren't exactly the most conscientious when it comes to things like deadlines (ie. yours truly)

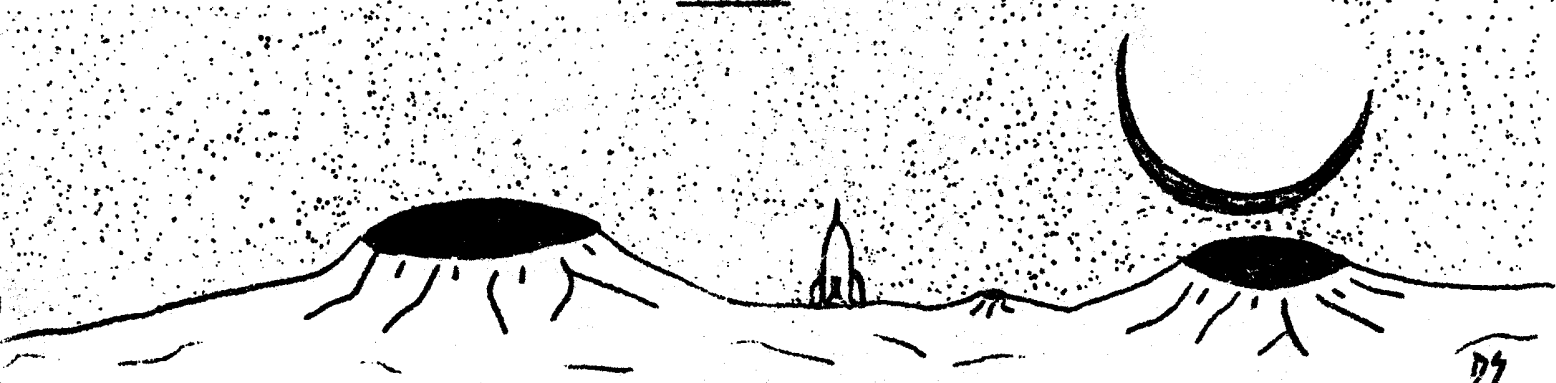
Steve & Bill--About the mass driver--I'm interested, but unfortunately would not be able to help much. I'm afraid I can't do much about providing scrounge, time, physics, or anything really, but yes, I'm interested.

Jamie--How about telling us a little about yourself? Though I doubt we'll be meeting in the near future, I'd still like to get to know you a little better. By the way, I think you're right about "Star Trek"--Roddenberry just doesn't care anymore.

Bill--Congrats to both you and Mary Lynn on "They don't write 'em like that...yet." Really nice.

Bentley--Thanks for your help at Confusion. It was much appreciated.

Guess that's all for now. I'll try to get my zine out by the deadline next time. Renee...really I will.



# Off the Top of my Head

No. II

...being, conceived, written, directed and starring, that master of the APA-waves, DOUG VAN DORN (Yay!), who can probably be located, for a little while, at least, at: 307 S. West Ave., Apt. E, Elmhurst, IL, 60126. (Gee, I hate it when you end a line with a number)

Here I am again, folks. After my previous (and first) APA, I have been told that double-spacing is distinctly non-APAish. But, after suffering through college journalism classes where I had to triple space or write five obituaries as punishment, I sorta got into a habit. Hope this looks a little better.

I know I promised some drivel on ST-TMP and Black Toi-Toi Hole, but I'm getting a little tired of those subjects. I have fired off my professional opinions (I did have a film review column for nearly two years) to Starlog, so if you really want my explicit opinions on the flick, check the magazine in a couple of months or ask me. All I'll say for now is Star Trek wasn't too bad, better than the series was, generally, and, re Black Hole, for \$20 million you shouldn't see the wires.

On to more interesting drivel. I've been out of a job since telling my former employer exactly what I thought of him in late November, but things are looking up. Michelle Colsher, who has a nice, cushy job at Western Eclectic out here in the western burbs, is trying to wrangle me a nice comfy job there tech writing. After talking to THE BOSS, I have found out a couple of things about it: they're desperate for people who can write, and are willing to train in any and all tech aspects; they want someone to more or less interview their engineers and regurgitate the information intelligently in user manuals, a job two years on a weekly newspaper vastly qualifies me for; and the abovementioned fact has endeared me forever to the guy who would have the final say in hiring me.

Only roadblock I can see right now is something called The Corporate System. Seems they want to keep new jobs in-house, reordering departments if they have to. And it seems that, for the two positions open, one person is being considered who works in East Slobovia and another, who isn't even aware she's wanted for the job, may be asked to move over from another department in the same plant. Since they both work for the Company already, they have a head start on me in terms of interviews. Oh, well. Maybe the one poor shmuck likes it in East Slobovia.

You know, I just realized the inherent flaw in writing these things single-spaced, at least on this machine: it takes a lot more drivel to fill up four pages, the goal I have set myself for this thing. (Sorry for the aside--don't want this to look too much like a one-shot.)

I've been considering doing a series of articles, for free-lancing purposes, such being a retrospective of the American exploration of space. My best thought thus far is to organize each article on the theme of an objective to be reached. The moon article would cover Ranger, Orbiter, Surveyor, the Mars article Mariner and Voyager, etc. Manned programs would have their own articles if I decided to get into them; there's been a lot written about them already, anyway.

The idea is based on article I sent to Pyro a long time ago that has never seen print--maybe I'll ask Jeff to send it back and put it in the Chicago Pyro I'll be editing this spring.

I think I may just be far enough down in the page to start ripping everyone else apart, so, presenting, for the first time,

BITING, SARCASTIC, WITTY AND INSIGHTFUL COMMENTS:

555 TIMES: Don't worry, Renee--the party came off just fine. Despite extreme lack of sleeping space (just makes it cozier, if you find the right floormate).

SINGULARITY:TWO: Yes, there is a great deal of interest in mass drivers, and I, for one, will be actively checking Western Eclectic's trash bins for any kind of helpful scrounge, assuming the job goes through. The article was a little bit beyond me, who never took Physics in high school, but I get the general idea. Suggestion: make the thing portable, so as to make it an attraction at conventions. Bet it'd outdraw two dancing robots any day.

As to any impending gafiation due to marriage, believe me, Steve, if my marriage is anything to go by, your fannish days are a long way from being over. However, it would be nice to see a little more of Carol every now and again--I don't think I even got the chance to be properly (or improperly) introduced the one time I met her.

OUTER DARKNESS: Good going, Donna! Don't let anyone tell you what you have to say isn't of any interest to anyone else. You're a good talker and a good writer, so don't sweat it. (By the way, I like Bill's first title suggestion, too. Snicker, snicker.)

CORONA: Dick, you write exactly the way you talk. As I read the zine, I could just hear your basso profundo adorning the spacious halls of Elmhurst Fandom. Next time, just for me, say something about donuts, will you?

WESTECH: Ah, Jamie, you bring out the closet Trekkie in me. Having been a Trekkie while the show was on the air and toning down an awful lot after passing the age of 13, I still like to hear a little good Trek talk now and again.

Higgins had an idea that might be worth mentioning: all you closet Trekkies out there should get together and pub a secret APA. It would be mailed in a plain brown wrapper, to protect all trufen

I like the idea of an electronic APA, but those of us out of school and not privvy to such nationwide systems as PLATO and not independently wealthy enough to buy, rent or otherwise obtain access to other nets would have great problems. I guess this is an idea that is still waiting for its time: when every house has microprocessors and is hooked into a nationwide (or worldwide?) Infonet.

MEROMORPHIC MELANGE: Will include my comments on this with Q.S. later.

Y.A.I.T.S.S.: The TMS990/189 sounds like an awfully expensive and complex system for the job it was built to do. Why not go a little further, get a full CRT display system capable of doing a little more than crunching numbers? (Unless, of course, that's all you want to do with your microprocessor.)

QUINTESSENTIAL SINGULARITY (&M.M.): You must figure out a way to transport your graphic star drive program to a place where both you and I will be sometime in the near future. I have dreamed all my life of star travel, and the thought of projecting star positional shifts on a CRT, however crudely, completely spellbinds me.

By the way, heard the furor over SS 433? Seems astronomers have found cycles in its radio output and X-ray signatures. May be a neutron star or a black hole orbiting an otherwise normal sun, but the wayest-out theories have the interaction shooting out charged particle beams from the sun's poles. The cycles can be explained by the beams' movement as the orbit and rotation sequences of the pair regress. Really fascinating.

ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BANDERSNATCH: So, Bill, now I know why you asked me for those long walks in the park! (Bill, just kidding---put that slaver disintegrator down, Bill! Oh, nooooooooooooo.....)

After hauling my ashes into a tnuclipun reintegrator, back to the story. For my thoughts on a mass driver (which you already know anyway), see my comments on Steve's zine.

Glad you liked Hyperdrift. Maybe one of these days I'll get to see the trailer.

As for your momentus sale, which, I understand, inspired one last verse for the song, I hope you and Barry do get enough money for a tank of gas. Come on down to Elmhurst and we can use up what's left on donuts.

As for the Bill and Barry Show, it must be nice to be half a fannish legend. For Whatcon, there'll have to be a definite Bill and Barry didn't Show, since I know you won't be there.

DR. GONZO'S: You have a definite problem, Valli. The printout you use, going right out to the edges of the page, really cramp your style. I finally had to give up trying to read some lines where Renee's gentle staples were covering your sterling words.

However, I hope everything settles down for you and that Apples stop looking like oranges. The little buggers are, I understand, simple to understand once you get the hang of it. Only problem is, it's hard to find a good, solid tree to hang them from.

HEADTOP--page four

GLEANINGS FROM THE DUSTBIN: Tertiary comment, Bill: Exxon is in a position to get out of the oil business, as are most other energy-based MNCs. In fact, some smaller companies that can't juggle books so well are finding it hard to make ends meet just selling oil. It may get to a point sometime soon when the big oil companies' subsidiaries make profits that carry a basically unprofitable oil department. And Ghod help us if the govt. gets it into its teeny-weeny little brain to nationalize the oil industry.

I can certainly sympathize with your library-hopping youth. I must have emptied all the grade school, high school and public libraries within reach before I got to college, covering so many different topics it's a wonder that I can't remember most of it. But college libraries can get frustrating. At NIU, I found this great book in the card catalogue on the Soviet space program, but when I found it in the stacks, it was written in Russian!

TALES FROM THE CHARMED SEA: Yes, Keith, the suit is a uniform, but as to the male-oriented society keeping it away from women, I'm afraid I can't agree. It's not in the advertising, it's in the real wear habits of the populace, and most career women I've seen wear pantsuits and skirtsuits interchangeably, but rarely wear plain skirts. Sex discrimination is a lot more deeply set than the way women wear clothes or the way the language is constructed. The true sign of a liberated society is being able to work in a framework developed in a sexist environment. Remember, the Constitution was written to protect white male landowners, and is now used to protect most of the citizens of the country. It's all how we interpret things, and we can get mighty silly in our attempts to change the framework, rather than changing the way we interpret it.

Enough preaching. The comments about the creative process and the need to use references to other peoples' ideas was right on. "I stand on the shoulders of giants," someone famous once said, and ignoring the giants that have come before can limit one's possible perspectives.

P2...etc: I really enjoyed the puzzle, but it seemed you were trying to lay a guilt trip on anyone who took the time to do it. If you have so many better things to do, why take the time to construct it at all? Oh, well. I, for one, am not going to feel guilty. I will point out, though, that in the diagram the word fanac is spelled "fannac" and weather balloons is missing its last "s."

You're not the only one who hasn't been bitten by the micro-processor bug, but now the tide may be turning. Those of us who haven't gotten into it in the past will be forced into it now, I think, if by nothing more than peer pressure and the social forces that are bringing the home computer into the fore. But, after all, we can't all be Alex Ellingsen (and may not want to be). (Just kidding, Alex.)

BENTLEY'S whatever the title was: RAEBNC..sorry.

Well, that's the end of the page, I guess. See you all later, and to those I didn't see at Ishercon or won't see at ConFusion, Happy New Year! Hope we get the Shuttle off this year, anyway!

## Smith's C O R O N A

Dick Smith's apazine for APA-TECH #5 - January 1980

### New News

This is the first APA-TECH zine produced from my new address; it will be short because I'm lots behind on other things to do. (That is, I thought it would be short... after the first draft, it looks like three pages again...)

On the back page, I will insert the moving flyer that Bill Higgins drew for me. **Many thanks** to Bill, and also Bill Leininger, Deb Winship and Valli Hoski for moving assistance. My new address is 426 Custer #2S; Evanston, IL 60202. My new home phone is 312-864-1618; my work number remains 312-266-4384.

Many of you noticed that Ms. Hoski & I are not only speaking again, but doing various other things together as well. I'm very glad that's settled; if you want more details, ask in person.

IsherCon II: Good job guys. I ate good, too. Perhaps next time we should all chip in for a porta-potty and bring immersion heaters for shower water. Or should we get Tullio to build a new water heater out of....

I'll be at WisCon for sure (money sent already), probably MiniCon, MarCon, WhatCon. I don't know where else. HoosierCon is a maybe. So are InConVenient (in Bowling Green, Ohio) or MidWesterCon (the con run by highschool students in St. Louis at which Phyllis Eisenstein is the GOH; may be only one day or cancelled?).

My car has been fine. I hate snow (as I write this, there's snow to scrape off my car before I can go home)!

I might send this zine to Renee by UPS rather than the Postal Circus. There's quite alot of stuff, as I have another zine (I

donated xerox time) and some strange material which I am not responsible for. Looks like quite a load, anyway. I'll let you know if that works out faster and/or cheaper.

### Electronic APAs

Several less-than-specific thoughts on hobby computer usage and other such shit...

I looked around at the several large systems selling time for hobby users. Some had **huge** sign-up charges which made them entirely useless for some purposes, and besides, they could fold in 6 months. Micronet didn't look too bad; it offered \$5 per connect hour and included 128Kbytes of disk. It's a DEC-10, and has TECO, even. Nine bucks to sign up, so like a crazy, **I did!** You can reach me at user code (70040,252).

I will offer some of my disk space for electronic APA use if anyone comes up with a program to maintain the data... I will probably work on some ideas myself, as I want a chance to write some DEC-10 assembler.

I know Bill Leininger has a big discussion of PLATO note files coming, so I won't go into details about those... they're quite reasonable, and those are the lines I'll be working along if I get going. I've worked with more tree-structured systems like Bill tells me exist on PLATO but I've never seen... they allow comment upon comments upon comments, and you can get lost... I like them alot, but maybe not on a dialup (slow printing) system.

Other thoughts... my computer isn't really ready to call other computers yet, except the one at the office; I don't have enough time to work on either the hardware or the software... Does anyone have specs

for the Vadic 3400 or Bell 212 modems that could be used for construction. Perhaps one of you phone-company types could find prints? I'd like to exceed 30 CPS but really don't have the money to spend on modems.

### Mailing Comments for APA-TECH #4

**Cover:** Real nice Phil. (Alice admitted at IsherCon that she didn't draw most of it like I thought.)

**555 Times//Struggling to...:** I know this zine is late, Renee, but it wasn't going to come at all except I snuck it in with somebody else's zine.

I **don't** like APA-ratus at all; reminds me of rats or something. Anyway, I don't like it. I **do** like APA-TECH.

**Singularity Two:** Three phone numbers in the masthead? I suppose you're not leaving fandom if you say you aren't, but why haven't we seen the lady with you?

(re your comment) Use solenoids, I guess, if you want to interface your pre-clunker typer. Lots of them — yuk! UNIX is nice, isn't it... altho I wouldn't name my operating system after a castrated elephant...?

I expect to see this oriental food palace of your come ultra-late March (eg. MarCon time). Sounds good... do you (plural) cook oriental? (I do.)

**Outer Darkness:** Hard to say much. I like Bill's first title suggestion, but it doesn't fit your intended image, so you won't use it.

**Westech:** Nice two column layout. I used the WS78 lots while I worked for DEC (and before, the OEM I worked for sold them) and found the software to be of exceptional quality. Jerry Pournelle has slandered it that system several times trying to

explain why he bought a low quality micro instead of a WS78.

You were right about StarTrek the Movie. Enough said.

See above for comments on electronic APAs.

**Meromorphic Melange//Quintessential Singularity:** RAEBNCH. Must admit that prefix "mero-" sent me to dictionary.

**Young & Abroad:** Too bad the board you describe had to be based on the TI9900. A cheaper 8 bit processor could bring the cost down under \$200. Not only that, there's lots more (hobby-level, true, but available) documentation, etc. available.

**Alexander's Ragtime Bandersnatch:** Spinthairoscope Media?

If you wished those thorium deposits weren't where they are, why are you there? I suggest you wear your film badge home lots. Maybe I even offer to help move?

I think I'll avoid any home-helium freezer experiments anyone else wants to conduct(?). Just like with certain lazars, I suspect that a reminder to **be careful** is appropriate here.

I, too, was surprised & impressed by Hyperdrift at ICon. I was rather disappointed that the D.D.Tog people then proceeded to kick everyone else out of the con's film room to go over their stuff with each other... I guess I think it's not too appropriate use of the con's facility; maybe I was just disappointed not to have it be my movie. Just a rumor, but guess which office computer is in the process of typesetting a film script for Stage Wars? I don't know who, how, when, or even if, but if you wanted to bet about what D.D.Tog is up to....

Ralston Purina. Yup. I saw behavior appropriate of "the Company" from them

when they took over Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, Inc., (now RalTech) where people I know used to work.

**Off the Top:** I sure hope this issue has some Hugo nomination suggestions besides Pyro (no, Renee, APA-TECH does not qualify as a fanzine). I'm not nominating for dramatic presentation, for reasons you've noticed.

**Dr. Gonzo's:** You have got to find a better repro mechanism than my office lineprinter! Please!

Do those con reports make sense to anyone who wasn't there? Or isn't that the point?

**Gleanings from the Dustbin:** Videodisks... for home use, the video/audio ones are going to get lots cheaper faster... we'll put the data on them FSK or phase encoded just like the audio tapes. Note that digital tape units are still quite high priced for what you get (\$200 compared to the \$500 floppy drive) but analog tape is \$35 plus a \$50 interface.

Regards the high-tech toys, I wonder, can Isher (and small timers like them) keep up. What are the technological forefronts for Tullio to build into next year's ray guns, now that Mattel has got not only blinkies, but 4-bit micros?

**Bacover:** Nice. (finally)

**p2:** Hard to comment on this one... No, I didn't do the find-a-word, altho I did

do the cryptograms (and wrote a SNOBOL program to help me, in fact) in a recent issue of Future Focus. I hope the find-a-word was machine generated... I can't imagine making one up by hand.

**MuBetan:** Alright, so your mu doesn't stand for micro like it does everywhere else.

Yes, Micronet is a DEC-10 running some strange monitor. I think the nonstandard stuff runs on top of TOPS-10, so you can do everything you're used to with other systems. More info as I explore (and see article above). Yes, TECO!

It's not an INTERLISP... it's just a little core only LISP that's about as useful as a core-only BASIC (that's really quite useful, isn't it). There's not enough room in to for EMYCIN, I'd guess.

Regards the One Shot, why point fingers? Anyway, there's at least one more such appearing in this issue, because it's being mailed in in the same envelope (box???) as my zine. (It's not my fault.) **Tales from the Charmed:** I doubt if suit wearing is sexist. When women get out into the "business world", they wear the same damned things that the men do. If anything, it's asexual conformance to some sort of conservative ideal, which might be just as bad.



HEY, BILL, COULD YOU COME OVER  
AND HELP ME MOVE?



I'VE GOT THE  
JUNK OF DAMOCLES  
HANGING OVER MY HEAD!

SUNDAY, 2 DECEMBER

4:30 PM

I RECEIVE URGENT  
CALL FROM DICK  
SMITH...

OP CODE

:C8

MNEMONIC

MDI

OPERATION

MOVE DICK IMMEDIATELY

I HUSTLE OVER TO DICK'S  
OLD PLACE AND BEGIN TO  
LOAD HIS STUFF INTO THE VAN...



SO THIS IS WHAT SKOKIE LOOKS LIKE...

DISREPUTABLE  
VAN  
RENTALS  
INC.

TERRAN ELECTRIC CORPORATION  
WELCOMES YOU TO  
EVANSTON

HIGGINS

WORLD'S  
HEAVIEST  
COMPUTER  
TERMINAL



DON'T WORRY -  
IT'S ONLY  
TWO MORE FLIGHTS!

... FINALLY WE DRAG ALL OF DICK'S STUFF  
UP TO HIS THIRD-FLOOR CRAWLUP APARTMENT  
SOMEHOW.

# coa

Richard H. E. Smith II

426 Custer Ave. #2S  
Evanston, IL 60202

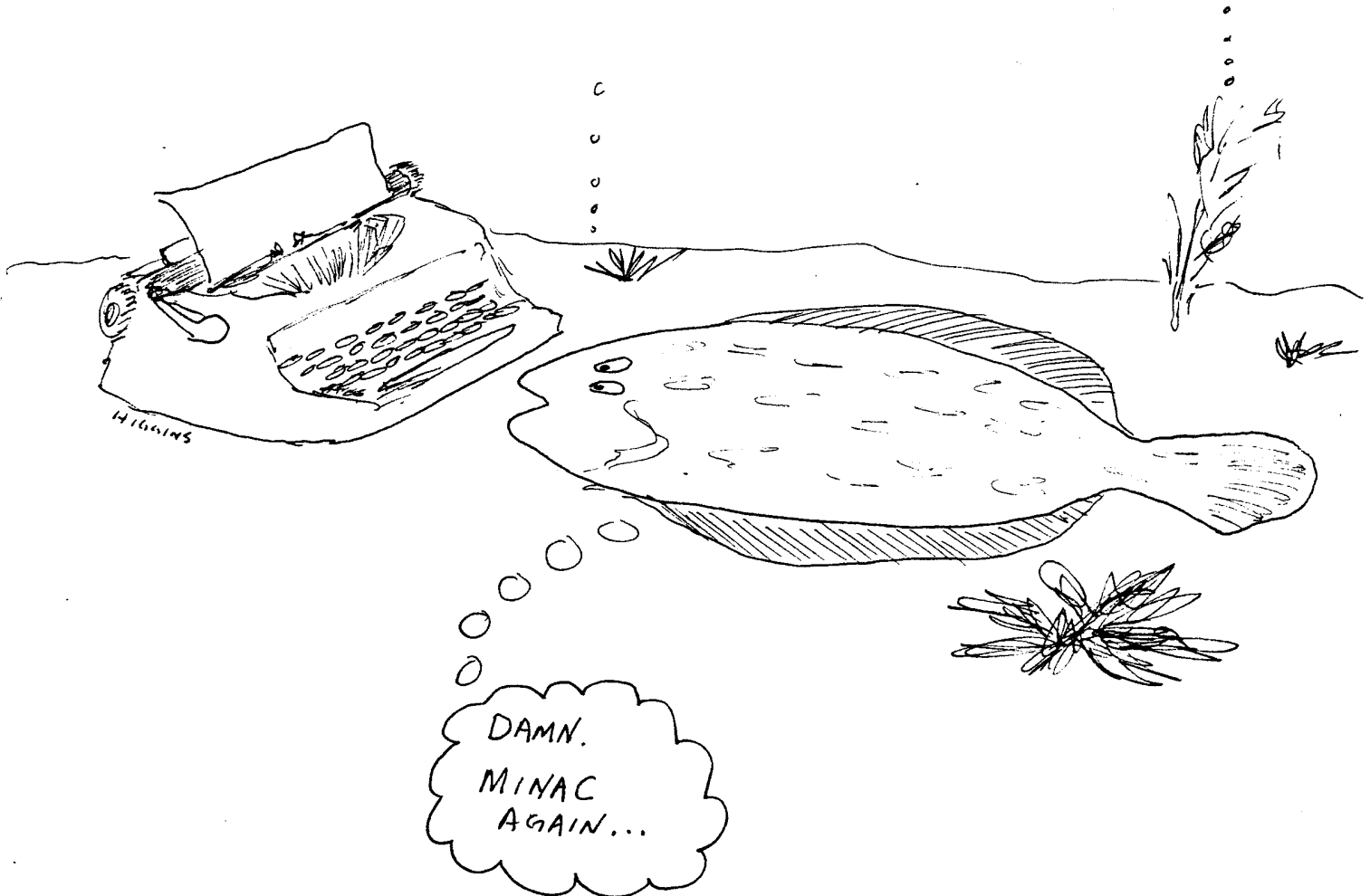
home (312) 864-1618

office (312) 266-4384

# FAN MAIL

FROM SOME

# FLOUNDER



1

"and they were techies..."

Wait a minute, that's someone else's bit of tripe. Start over.

Ah, here we are at another gathering of the loyal Sunday Night Becoming Regulars. Listening to talk about fill-in Analog editors who are imported from the frozen wastelands of Alaska. Maybe you need to have a frozen brain to edit Analog.

Valli's suggestion to start off with--"It was a warm and snowy night." But Bill says it isn't snowing, and one of the planets is an airplane that ain't Jupiter. Dick wants me to put in a bunch of stuff about orgies, but I can't draw a grape, so I won't.

Ah, dabbling into the occult. Gretchen's going to read Valli's cards. I can only read flash cards, and they don't do much for me. Anyone know what 555 times the knight of cups is?

Just had a nice discussion on spacecraft tracking. It seems NASA is closing down all its out-of-country tracking stations. This capability will be replaced by the Tracking Data Relay Satellite System (TDRSS), but their launch is set for the shuttle, which is further and further behind. When the TDRSS is up, though, it will completely replace the Deep Space Network and the only earth stations needed will be at Cape Canaveral and at Goldstone. Also, a smallish backpack will be able to get nav fixes from the TDRSSs and give you an accurate location, altitude and motion readout.

Enough of this space talk. Valli, working on a project, has run into something called "wicat," which Dick just figured out what it means. If you can also figure out what it means, call Hudson 3-2700 and get some carpets cleaned.

If anyone knows what kind of animal you get tripe from, tell us. I insist it's from sheep, Gretchen says it's from cows. This topic doesn't sit too well with Valli, who just read "alien" today, having never seen the film. The imagination can be so much gorier than the film media.

"But she doesn't wear queen size cups!", said Doug. General uproar from the assembled crowd, a few "that is really tacky!"s but not disagreement....but who is she?? The cards say that Dick is between two women. But not now or actively engaged in any exhibitionistic behavior, after all this is a gathering of techies. Maybe when we all find the lady who is into her cups, in a queen-sized style, we will find Dick's alter lady. "You forgot the swimming pool...."

Wait a second--I don't remember writing this last paragraph--am I slipping back into my old multiple personality problem--Ohhhh nnnnoooooo.....

Oh, thank God, it was Valli. Well. After wresting control back over this thing I call--well, it doesn't have a name yet--this is degenerating. Get me a generator, quick!

Back to my senses again. Gretchen says I sound like I'm drunk. I'm high, all right, but not on false drugs...ooooops, stealing from Firesign Theater, there. Sorry. As I was saying, Gretchen is trying to read Tarot cards, but the cats keep thinking they can contribute to the reading by rearranging the cards by sitting on them, laying on them, etc.

/z/

As I finished the first ~~page~~ page, Dick grabbed it, heading for the john, remarking on the timeliness of my finishing the page. I hope he meant for reading, not using for hygiene purposes.

Bill just asked if Thermofax was Gandalf's horse. Guess he just isn't into reproduction fandom yet (either that, or he loves to pun around with it).

By the way, for those of you without a program, when I say Bill, I could mean Bill Higgins or I could mean Bill Leininger. Since it would spoil a lot of nice, entertaining confusion, I refuse to identify which is which. (Hello, Bruce, I'd like you to meet Bruce, Bruce, Bruce, Bruce and Bruce.....)

Back to the occult, Gretchen just tried to interpret the Tarot using the TV Guide. Is that the ace of quincies?

New Sunny International Films release: "The Guyana Tarot: Occult of the Damned."

Nine Billion Names of God on the Wall Dept.--Bill says when the last (not next; last) book of the Riverworld series is printed and the last Asimov robot collection is printed simultaneously, the world will come to an end. Also, the Last, Final, I'm Not Kidding, Folks, Dangerous Visions will come out earlier that day, thereby robbing Harlan of the satisfaction of causing the end of the world he resents so.

Bill's APA Lament--"Half a page, half a page, half a page onward..."

"Wasn't TDRSS the name of the phone booth that Dr. Who used to travel in time?"

(There are more space shuttles in this living room than in any I've ever visited-- four that I can see from here.

(The great danger of this Encyclopedia of SF is that's it makes it far too easy to come up with poor trivia questions. All you have to do is leaf through it until you run into some silly or banal fact. What is Bob Tucker's first name? ((Arthur.)) In what year was Fred Pohl born? ((1919.)) Trivia questions, in my humble opinion, should be attached to some snippet of memory in the mind of the person asking. This gives the contestant some chance of recalling the answer himself. Plucking facts at random from a reference seems hardly fair. Perhaps at a later date we will discuss the CHUSFA/Whatcon system of rating trivia questions.)

New TAROT cards... the Seven of Fives, the Duke of Hazard... (Gretchen grabs the TV Guide instead of the tarot book). What about the single card tarot computer? Perhaps the techish tarot, with the burning circuit-board, the robot, the Mundane?, the famous author??

SIT DOWN AND FINISH THAT FANZINE!!!

Okay, Okay, I'm sitting. Standing around watching other people work on your zine is like making a model and letting your older brother put in all the clear windows, so you don't goop them up. You may get a better looking end product, but you can't say it's all yours.

Bill just accused me of starting General Tacknics, for being the tackiest one here. And there was no sex, because they were all tacky.....

Speaking of weddings (which I wasn't, but everyone else in the room here is), someone got out the wedding album here and are looking at pictures of Jeff avariciously chasing a guest with a slit skirt. Not having Cosmo there, he had to do his chasing all by himself.

Dick just hit a high falsetto note from a song from "The Fantasticks" and swore he'd deny it if anyone said anything. Well, Dick, deny away!

Can you imagine a production of the "Fantasticks" with Dick as Louisa and me, (Gretchen) as El Gallo. He can hit the high notes, and I did him in High School drama class. (It was an all-girl high.)

"Die again, Mort'ner!"

But if Dick can hit those high notes, then what sordid detail about his person is he trying to hide?? Come to Wednesday nights and find out!! Don't ask him, he'll deny ~~everything~~....somethings.

"My fingers want to do something that they are used to doing but they can't find the...."fades out Bill. "You can type, talk and listen at the same time, how disgusting", adds another Bill. Well guys what can I say except that I am very talented!!

NOTE: this deviant brainabomination is the child of several very techie, very fannish types who are congregating in the usual "Sunday night" mode, so there. Individual responsibility is hereby denied, or in other words, we will all be damned or loved together!!

Lull....lull....quick somebody think of something to say!! Ah, that's better. It must have been one of those every twenty minute lulls.

Bill and Gretchen are now studiously playing with a Buck Rogers Colorforms kit Valli brought. A real, honest-to-Ghods Gil Gerard-type Buck Rogers Colorform set. Oh, well, everyone to their own fanac. (Incidentally folks, that same Colorforms set can be had for one dollar and sixty-eight cents plus tax at the Evanston K-Mart at Main St. and McCormick, for all you latent Colorforms fiends who had a deprived childhood!!!!!!!)

Now Bill is trying to play my guitar (and is doing a pretty good job, too) with only three strings available. It seems one of the strings, the D string, slipped out and is too short to put back. They're over there now, singing something I've never heard before about the Neo-Christian life. Sounds dangerous to me.

Someone just asked who the four Dr. Who's were, and Gretchen answered, quite correctly, Dr. Who, Dr. Who, Dr. Who and Dr. Who. She also said Colorforms should have little speech bubbles that are blank and a pen that writes on it. Make your own conclusions.

BILL: I'm afraid I write rather drily.

DOUG: Quick! Get that man a glass of water!

BILL: I've already got enough stuff to drink.

GRETCHEN: Is that why you're all wet?

And no one wants to watch Monty Python. Maybe because it's film outside. And there are some Gumbys in the street. So, who needs that kind of humor when we have our own? Right? And I've just been informed that they won't play songs I know, they're going to teach me what they're playing. "You will learn Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young and YOU WILL LIKE IT!!!!!!!"

OK, let's try some Elton John now, OHMIGAWD, Elton John sung by fen???? aghhh, my ghods, my word, must be the time of night....that is the only permissible excuse, if there is any! "Is that the last page?" ("We can't end a one-shot on Elton John, for ghods sake!) Put another page on the 'writer is this last sentence.....

And here is a new writer for the next sentence....  
But to find that writer....

For the record, there still hasn't been anything worth denying going on here, if that's important... noone sang that badly....  
ANYTHING!!!

(( "Type 'anything'," and so she does. There's little hope for much inspired for the rest of this oneshot. It remains Sunday night, tho barely, and discussions of tomorrows work have begun. There will be cover art, if we can find a sufficiently flat fish to steal from.))

Dick just told me he's not inspired tonight. Wouldn't know it from the way he was carrying on earlier. (Ha, ha, ha.....starting nasty rumors is my specialty!)

It's no longer barely Sunday night, it's now all of Monday morning (by about 40 seconds), and we all gathered around the ball clock to watch all the balls fall down. Boy, we're easily amused.

Oh oh. Dick's starting to make noises like he's going to start and orgy with Valli, right on the floor. They have desisted so as not to offend either Bill, who both have reasons to be offended. As for me, I'd rather not be a spectator, but, so goes the world. Besides, we're techies, and NO. NOT THAT LINE AGAIN. Sorry. NONONONONO, Dick and Valli have avoided unmentionables because they just want to be spectators, but then there is this whole silly business of of image and reputation to have to keep up... and after all, we are techies and YES. That line again!!!!

Sorry, dear Reader. It's time to go. No, not quite....

Worldcon costume ideas (these ideas are available for your use... WE DON'T WANT THEM.):

(1) dress first member up in an ape suit, then the second in an Empire-State-Building suit.

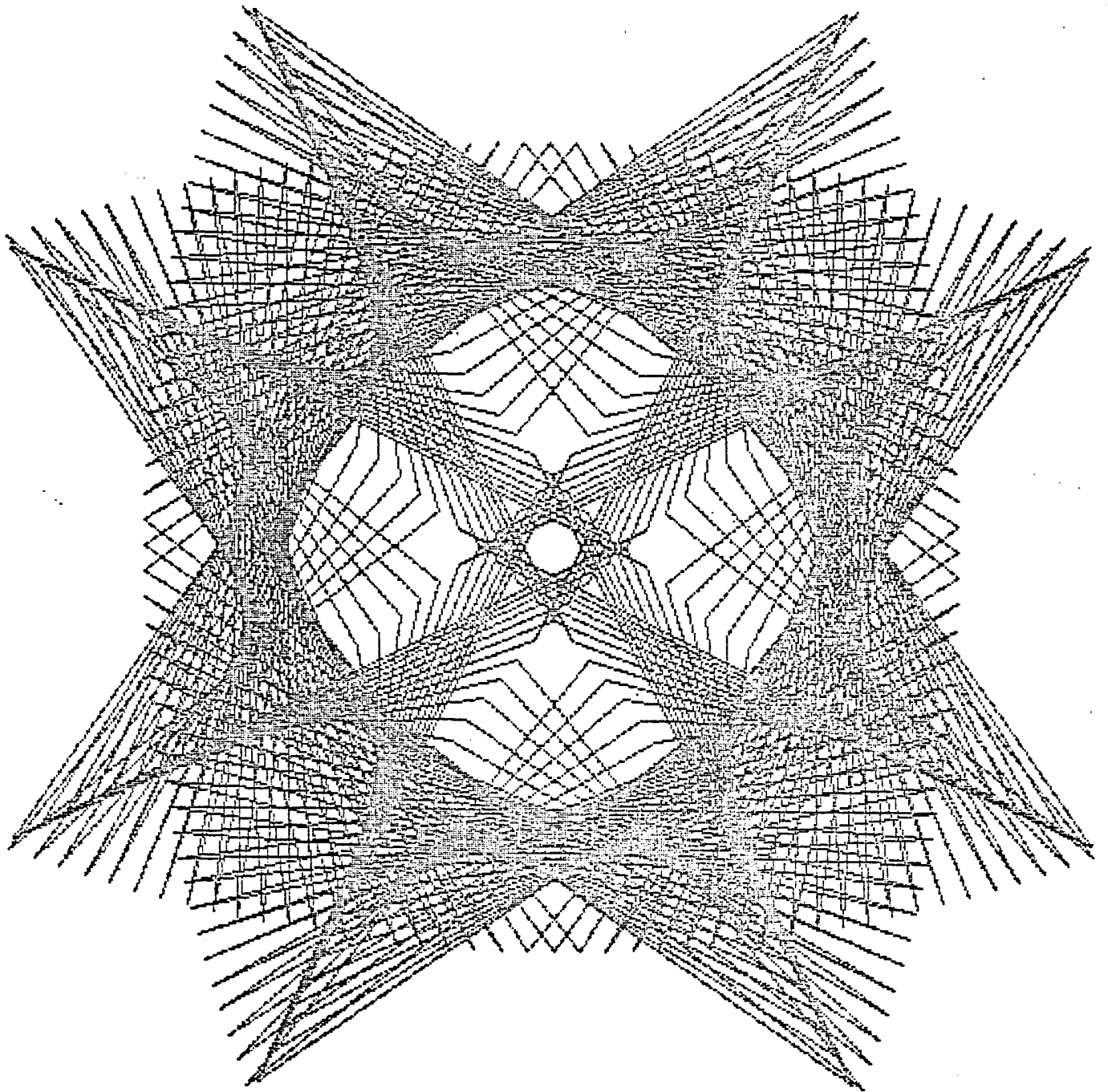
(2) how about a sandworm suit?

Remember, no one is too close to the stage except the judges, so don't worry about your lack of clothing in designing your costume... the gold makeup will cover fine. ((But we also have on good authority that you won't be able to remember how you were brave enough to do it.))

\*\*\*

We leave you, dear techies, until next time. And remember, if you're looking for a good microcomputer on a silicon duck, just look in the yellow pages under "Sperry UniQuack."

So long.



Being a production of  
the Midnight Oil Company  
for APATECH #5

By Bill Leininger  
15 S. Maple Ln.  
Prospect Hts.  
ILL 60070  
(312) 398-7742

Well, it's that time again. (In fact, I might as well admit it, it's past that time. It's 11 PM on February second.) Here I sit surrounded by scraps of paper scribbled with ideas.

Since last I wrote I've started class at the local junior college. Because the school thinks that it teaches things differently from the U of I, I am required to retake introductory chemistry and analytical geometry. The math review I need, but so far the chemistry has been a breeze. Also, I underwent a brief period of hospitalization for an infected cyst just after new years. Bummer. (But thanks to Doug and Gretchen Van Dorn, Dick Smith, Valli Hoski, and Jerry Corrigan for visiting and helping to make it bearable.)

Jamie Hanrahan is right. There have been lots of mentions all over the place of electronic APA's. And when they were mentioned it was in the manner of "Well, what about an electronic APA?" without details. In fact, I only know of two items printed on this subject longer than a sentence or two. Jamie's, and the one you are about to read. Which was, incidently, typed as a disorganized page of notes before I read the last APATECH. (Remind me to tell you about my two week lead time on reality someday...)

I see basicly two ways of implementing an electronic APA. One is nothing but an online version of that which you see here before you. The other is (I think from the description) a slightly more advanced version of what Jamie described last month. By this, of course, I mean a PLATO notefile, which I shall now describe.

For those of you unfamiliar with it, PLATO is a computer aided instruction system developed at the U of I and now being marketed by Control Data. The largest version of this system remains the original in Champaign with over six hundred terminals from Delaware to Hawaii. Some courses are actually taught with just a lecture section and a scheduled PLATO session, with online quizzes. My job one semester was to sign people

A DEMON OF THE SECOND KIND



into these quizzes and generally watch over the equipment and assist the students. But I digress.

One of the most amazing features of PLATO is the degree of communication it allows between programmers (or authors as they are called). The most relevant feature here is (I did finally get around to it, see?) the notefile.

The first thing you see when you enter a notefile is the index. This occupies about a quarter of the page. In it is listed a number for each note, a title which tells you what the note is about (unless the author is being funny), and the number of responses. Information is only displayed on about 15 notes at a time, but there are key sequences for scrolling the index.

You refer to notes by their numbers from the index page. When you arrive at a note, you get all the information that was on the index plus the name of the person who wrote it, what their group is (a group is just a bunch of other authors who have their sign-ons from the same person and are mostly doing almost the same thing you are.), and what time they wrote it. Oh, and the body of the note (about twenty lines long). From this point you have several choices. You can continue on to the next note, give up the whole thing in disgust, or read the responses to the current note.

Now a response is almost the same as a note (it contains all the same information except it's own title), except that it is only accessible through the original note. Hopefully the text still is on a subject that bears some resemblance to what you were talking about in the first place.

This apart, most notefiles tend to be on only one subject. The maximum number of responses is 99, and none but the most controversial notes reach this. (and even then most people wish it never had.)

Another nice feature of notefiles is related to the fact that every thing you write in one is dated. There is a special part of the program that you give a date and time, and it will search out every note and response that was written after that.

By contrast, a plain old electronic APA would function about like a regular APA. A contributor would write and edit their contribution online, and then submit it to the editor. The editor would give it's name and an individual number to a router program. When the deadline haspassed, it would be opened to the members. Mailing comments could be appended directly, and two or three issues would be kept on line. When room ran out

aDotSK  
"Is this page three?  
Yup."

the earliest issue would be printed out for all the members, and it would be removed from the system.

Now, there are some problems with this idea. Most obviously, you're automatically limiting your audience. Not everyone has access to a computer, let alone the same one. Not even Techies, which is why I am against the idea of turning APATECH into an electronic APA. Even worse is the fact that we couldn't do artwork then... These are the reason I don't view this sort of thing as a replacement for traditional media. However, it is a valid, new media.

Speaking of electronic media, I promised some people that I'd print the address of the british company that has an album of the first four episodes of the Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy. I copied the address from a copy Paula Smith had at Ishercon. Here it is:

Original Records Ltd.  
38 Long Acre London WC2  
UK

The records number is ORA 42.

I once heard a friend (I honestly don't remember who, and probably couldn't say even if I did) confess that one of his ambitions was to cruise through the moon system of Jupiter. And this was after Pioneer 10. I personally have no desire to contract terminal radiation sickness, but have an idea. Saturn would probably be much more impressive, and I seem to recall that the rings had some effect that made the magnetic field far less intense, and thus Saturn's immediate vicinity is much more habitable. Can anyone confirm this? And tell me generally how much shielding I would need?

Well, the world is finally catching up to Chuck Ott. In September, 1977 Analog printed the story, Astrological Engine. Well, astrological calculators came out about a year later, but another feature that Chuck used is only now becoming a widespread news item. That feature is the Electrochromic display. In the last month, this device has appeared in mentions in Electronics, Electronic products, and Byte.

By now, some of you are screaming "What is an electrochromic display. Well, it is a type of display which uses a substance which changes color in response to a pulse, but requires no power to maintain the change. In fact, in order to change it back you have to send it a pulse of opposite polarity. New substances have

aDotSK  
Good lord, how'd I ever  
string this out to:  
page 4

recently been tried, and after 5 hours with no power, the display was still 90% as opaque as it had started. It is relatively temperature insensitive, can be flipped state at least one million times with no ill effect, and is as fast as recent LCDs. One report even claims that they can be mass produced cheaper than any other current display. One thing, though. No one has ever built a display with this stuff. However, they think now that they finally have a fairly good material to work with, they will get around to it this year...

And now it's time to step out on a limb. This is an idea that came to me the other day, and seems so fascinating that I just can't resist passing it along. Chimpanzees have been taught a type of pushbutton language and even a slightly modified form of sign language (admittedly with a limited vocabulary). What proves that they really have some understanding of language is some of the improvisation and generalisations made necessary by trying to get certain points across in a limited language. Now, here's the part I'm not sure about. (and if I'm wrong, will someone please correct me?)

Communication also occurs between Chimpanzees naturally, but on a much more rudimentary level. In the wild, the communication is more in symbols. Short, terse grunts and screechs communicating things like "get out of my territory, or I'll bite you", to over anthropomorphize it. Just warning sounds, and other signals. A level of abstraction below words, so to speak. But the main point is this. Either through lack of necessity or inability, the chimpanzee has not really developed it's own language, yet it is capable of using, understanding, and expanding one it has been taught. Is it possible that there are two levels involved here? One the ability to invent language, and the other the ability to use it? And one not necessarily dependant on the other? (though I suppose one must be able to use a language in order to invent it...) Being taught is different from discovering, but the fact that they could extend the range of what they had been taught indicates that they maybe only needed a push in the right direction. I wonder if this could have been done (if civilisation had existed) two or three thousand years ago, for example? Or are Chimpanzees evolving? Just because they say that once a creature becomes intelligent and invents medicine they stop evolving is no reason for the rest of the animal world to stand still... Indeed, it hasn't. Look at pesticide resist strains of rats, for example. Of course, there they had man's help, so to speak.

Well, it's now quarter after twelve on the fifth of february. If this page looks different, it's because I'm at Dick Smith's place of employ, using his Xerox machine and incidentally, this Selctric. Many thanks, Dick. Nothing left now but the:

Mailing Comments.

The 555 Times- Renee, I honestly am sorry about this constant last minute bit on submissions. The problem for me is not so much not writing anything until the minute before the deadline, but that I always wait that long to put anything in final form. One or two sections of this months 'zine existed in scribbled or scrambled typing since shortly after New Years and my forced hospital stay. Maybe next time I'll make it in by deadline.

As for Apa-ratus, I'd say no. It's not that bad, but I'd rather not call it that. How about Apa-gee? (Or Apa-G<sub>T</sub>?)

Singularity: Two- The tech library privileges sound nice. And I've run into three or four fannish librarians myself lately. Must be a trend...

As for the mass-driver, I'm willing to help in whatever way I can. Which probably means winding coils. As for what type we should build, I give you my opinion after I've given it some more thought.

Looking forward to seeing the stained glass.

Outer Darkness- That does seem to be an increasing problem. As the number of friends one has in convention fandom increases, the amount of spare time you have from greeting them to get in deep conversations with them does decrease. I haven't found any answer to this yet, either.

As for huckstering, I haven't tried it yet, but it's probably only a matter of time. (OK, Colsher, where does the title come from?)

Smith's Corona- The PDP-11/44 does sound nice, but it still isn't cheap enough. And what's a commercial instruction set? Automatic inflation in the op codes? (BRANCH up 3, from A9...)

Mailing Comments-  
(cont.)

Smith's Corona (cont.)- Maybe OMNI would be a good place to push rayguns. But how about getting ISHER covered on something like Prime Time Saturday, or even (shudder) Real People?

Westech- Yes, Star Trek was visually impressive even if some of the sequences were too long. It just proves that we now have the technology to do virtually any science fiction we want for the screen. All we lack is proof of an audience and a producer we can trust.

The costume bit you mentioned didn't come off in Chicago, but there are a bunch of Milwaukee people coming to a local shopping in the suburbs next weekend (I.E. Feb. 15) which sounds like it. Costu-es and an old bridge mock-up.

Glad to hear that there's finally another notefile system getting under way. I know there has been electronic conferencing of one type or another going on for years, but mostly it has been dedicated to much more businesslike topics. And if anything like this is on ARPANET, I'd like to hear about. (not that I have access to ARPANET, but I am interested in hearing all the different ways this idea has been implemented)

For other comments, see third paragraph of page one.

Meromorphic Melange- RAE very much, BNC

YAAITSS- Hmmm. The TI thing doesn't sound ideal. Have you considered something based on the KIM? I know that it is only 8 bits, but last I looked it was only \$179, and for sixty bucks more you could get an add on that makes it into a CRT. (The TV Typewriter 6 and five eighths. I don't know how good it is, and it seems to tie up the processor quite a bit, but at these prices you can equal your deal in price and get a terminal with good character density besides... (besides, if you took it and hooked it to

Mailing Comments (cont.)-

YAAITSS (cont.)- another, normal KIM, you might have a rather cheap, fairly intelligent terminal.)

The Quintessential Singularity- Well, 42% chance of an observable supernova by 2000 doesn't seem that poor odds. I was expecting much lower. By the way, is there anything interesting about borderline cases between neutron stars and black holes? You know, just on one side of the critical mass by only a couple of hundred tons, say? (thus giving away my ignorances of astronomical facts...)

Alex's Raggy Bandersnatch- Well, look at all the tax money the town will save on street lighting with all that Thorium around. Maybe it's really an approach beacon for O'Hare...

I don't know about superconductivity hobbyists. Wouldn't some pretty big price reductions in basic metals be necessary? (Then again, maybe not. I had a friend once who had to do a seminar on organic superconductors. They're only theoretical today, but there's a lot of theoretical ideas which made it through before, and a lot of work has been done on what their characteristics should be.) Also, I'm not sure that there are that many home experimenters who would feel all that comfortable around liquid Helium...

It's nice to see "Home on LaGrange" getting some fairly public attention, but Pournelle sort of ruined it with that lousy intro about microwave densities and ducks. All that verbiage on one line.

Off The Top Of My Head- Don't worry about the Apa-ing, it gets easier as you go along. Why, I'm only on my seventh page of my second issue and already I have a whole sheet of paper covered with format changes and things not to do...

Mailing Comments (concluded)-

Off the Top of My Head (cont.)- I must admit that I still haven't seen Superman. I suppose if it comes around again, I'll have to.

I, too, enjoyed Time After Time, despite the fact that the final plot device (not the writer gets the girl bit, that was still open to question) that was used to get rid of the ripper. The instant you heard the explanation of what it was, a light goes on. However, I didn't let it get in the way of my enjoyment.

Dr. Gonzo's- It is a bright and sunny morning. (Not quite, but it's getting there... Nine hours to Chem class.)

As for sparing us the lurid details, I'm sure you won't. What can you say about chocolate covered con reports? Well, at least the traditional blizzard missed ConFusion.

I shall tactfully refrain from commenting on my own 'zine.

P2- Thanks for the word puzzle. I haven't finished it yet, but already I have also found lake, spill, and a variety of other unlisted words which I forgot to write down.

Sorry to hear about the physics class troubles. However, that does sound like a good job. Shame they won't be looking for non-students up north next summer...

I don't know about a competition for length of 'zine. After having this sort of thing happen to me, I suspect it's just more a case of getting out of hand than anything else. I only wish I had had sense enough to decide to finish this next time after deadline had come and went, like you did...

aDotSK

After the last page

Nine

Mailing Comments (well, I was within 10%)-

Fearless MuBetan-Would you mind explaining that course on the politics of minerals someday.

The stories sound interesting. But where do the Tacos come in. (I have an idea, but if I'm wrong I may use it in a story myself. Finders, keepers.) And what is that bit on page four about the bozo shirt?

As for Hugo books, I'm backing Roadmarks by Zelazny, Castle Roogna by Piers Anthony, and Sorcerer's son by Eisenstein. Great stuff.

Charmed Sea 4- I have always tended to feel that a suit is a uniform only if you let it be one. It is true that a revolution in male fashions didn't really come off in the workplace. However, outside of work is a different story. (perhaps as a reaction to suits...) Of course, I really don't know, as I am not required to wear a suit. And as far as I know, neither are you. Of course, you are a grad student and not an executive.

On "Roadmarks", I agree on the length and ending. I hope it will be a limited series. I have questions I'd like answered about the road.

Best of luck with the Quals! (The time lag will get you every time. They're over by now I'm sure, but I haven't heard the results yet.)

Ending

Well, it's done. Now I see why they say that once you've used a selectric, you'll never go back. If only I had the money.

If I were a rich man, ya ta tata tata ta...



aDotSK  
This page does not exist  
ten

Title department- The Title for this work was derived  
from a story by Stanislaw Lem in the Cyberiad.  
A Demon of the second kind differs from that of Maxwell  
in that the second kind looks at configurations of  
air molecules and literally pulls information out  
of that thin air. Only truthful information, too.  
(must look at the Quarks...) The problem is that  
it produces endless amounts of true information and  
quite literally snows you under. Never again will  
I tempt fate with such a title...

Farewell, and see you when next our paths may cross

CHECK BOX AFTER  
EACH STEP.

## THE TWO SHOT

### THE OFFICIAL GENERAL TECHNICS SEX MANUAL

- ☐ 1. REFERRING TO THE PARTS LIST {FIGURE 1}, UNPACK AND COUNT ALL PARTS. BE CERTAIN TO USE CARE IN UNPACKING, AS SOME PARTS MAY BE DAMAGED BY EXCESSIVE HANDLING. {SAVE PACKING MATERIAL FOR LATER RE-USE.}
  - ☐ 2. CAREFULLY ARRANGE ALL PARTS ON THE WORKING SURFACE. BE SURE TO TEST ALL PARTS FOR CORRECT FUNCTION. {DO NOT APPLY FULL POWER AT THIS POINT. THIS MAY LEAD TO PERMANENT DISFUNCTION OR UNWANTED DISCHARGE.}
  - ☐ 3. MANIPULATE KNOBS C & D IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM RESONANCE. FREQUENCY RESPONSE WILL VARY WITH INDIVIDUAL UNITS.
  - ☐ 4. IT IS NOW NECESSARY TO SELECT ONE OF TWO SIMPLE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN CHOSEN AS APPROPRIATE FOR THE NEOPHYTE EXPERIMENTER:
    - A | POSITION UNIT 1 WITH TAB A FACING DOWNWARD IN  
| PROXIMITY TO SLOT B ON UNIT 2.
    - B | POSITION UNIT 2 WITH SLOT B FACING DOWNWARD IN  
| PROXIMITY TO TAB A ON UNIT 1.
- IN BOTH CASES, BE CERTAIN THAT THE WEIGHT OF THE UPPER UNIT IS PARTIALLY SUPPORTED BY RETRACTABLE STRUTS L, M, N, & P.
- ☐ 5. VERIFY THAT SLOT B HAS BEEN PROPERLY LUBRICATED. IN THE EVENT THAT IT IS NOT, RETURN TO STEP 3.
  - ☐ 6. INSERT TAB A INTO SLOT B. REPEAT AS NECESSARY.

#### CAUTION

FACTORY PRIME PARTS MAY FIT TIGHTLY ON FIRST INSERTION. IF PROPER LUBRICATION IS PRESENT, UP TO 30 KG. {65 LBS.} THRUST MAY BE USED.

IF THIS PROCEDURE IS NOT SUCESSFUL, CONSULT A TECHNICAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST BEFORE FURTHER ASSEMBLY IS ATTEMPTED.

PARTS LIST

REFER TO THE ILLUSTRATION BELOW.

NOTE: PARTS SUPPLIED WITH YOUR KIT MAY NOT APPEAR EXACTLY AS SHOWN. PRIME PARTS ARE ILLUSTRATED. YOUR KIT MAY CONTAIN 'MISMARKED' OR OTHERWISE DISCOUNTED PARTS. THESE WILL STILL OPERATE CORRECTLY, AND SHOULD PROVIDE YOU WITH COMPLETE SATISFACTION.

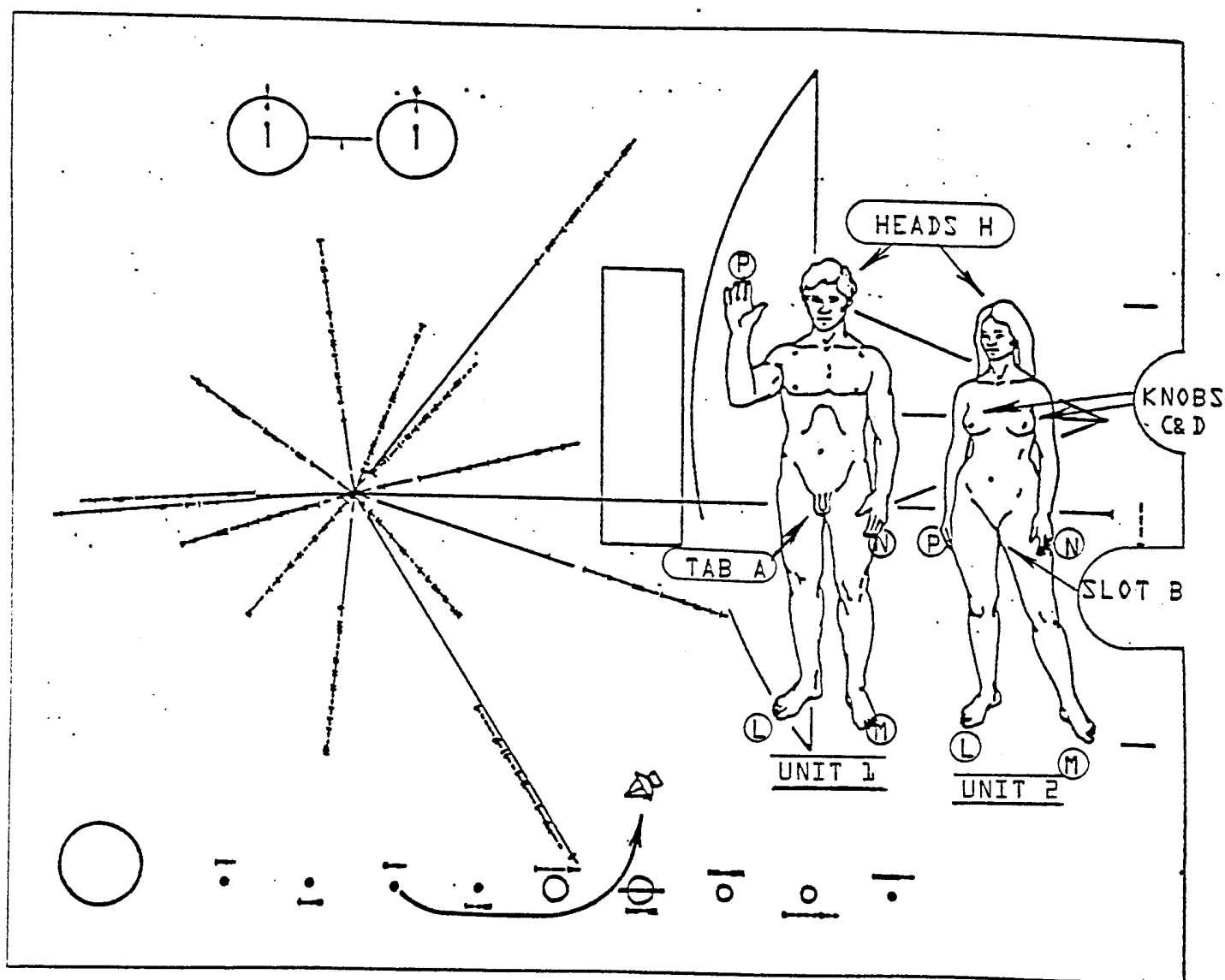


FIGURE 1

## ROSES TO DEADEN THE CLOUDS AS THEY FALL



(what?)

...ground out by Bill Higgins for the breathlessly awaited appearance of Apa-Tech #5, as the winter of 1980 wanes. I may be found, when I'm not out somewhere typing apazines, at 853 Lorlyn Drive, Apartment 1A, West Chicago, Illinois, 60185. This is Spinthairoscope Media publication number Four.

\*\*\*\*\*just&love&typing&thes&borders\*\*\*\*\*

Your correspondent is now the proud owner of his own Motie. Mary Lyn Skirvin, God love 'er, presented me with a lovingly crafted Motie of brown velour, about two feet tall, for my birthday. He--she?--wears a turquoise T-shirt reading: "Bill Higgins' Fyunch-click." Naturally, I call him Eddie.

Mary Lyn reports that she had a tough time explaining to the employees of the T-shirt lettering shop just why her shirt had three arms. Once they had applied the letters and brought the plate of the press down, they discovered it wouldn't come up. The reset button was jammed and nobody knew what to do. Mary Lyn, in true Motie fashion, unplugged the machine, crawled into its guts, and made repairs. The grateful T-shirters waived payment for the lettering. Would this have happened if she had brought in a human T-shirt?

An hour ago J. Allen Hynek gave a colloquium here at Fermilab. He was less quantitative, and less impressive, than when I saw him a few years ago at Notre Dame. Rather than giving a comprehensive overview of serious UFO studies, he was making a pitch for one particular idea: funding for laboratory studies of the physical evidence (burn marks, footprints, funny chemicals, soil samples) left by some UFO events-- Close Encounters of the Second Kind, to use Hynek's now-famous classifications.

There was quite a turnout, and it was clear that most of the folks here had some interest in Hynek's approach. Physical evidence is the one thing we could get our teeth into with methods everybody can agree upon, and the only feature of the phenomena which offers an opportunity for reproducible tests. The rest, to paraphrase Lord Rutherford, is merely stamp collecting. Getting any money will be an uphill battle, because even if the credibility and worth of the program is established, there's no category to place it under in most funding agencies. And think of Senator Proxmire...

Doctor H. seems much more ready these days to consider little-green-man-type explanations for UFOs. After all, there are people observed in some of these things-- though the phenomena are not consistent with space travel as we understand it. I'm not gonna go that far yet, but certainly physical and chemical testing is a good idea. It may be a long time before anybody, even Mike Brandl, understands what's going on here. But this is a step in the right direction.

I've been indulging of late in one of my stranger vices, the reading of science fiction criticism. I have yet to find a pattern which predicts just which people in a group of fans will be strongly interested in the stuff. But there's one book almost everybody can enjoy: Damon Knight's collection of book reviews, In Search of Wonder, from Advent. After twenty years it's still a good read as anybody gets

(though I'd like to see the reviews of A. J. Hudrys similarly collected). Would-be writers, and Are writers, will find a wealth of detail on successful and failed techniques. Perhaps the casual reader will find his critical faculties sharpened after an encounter with Knight's acute perception. But for pure entertainment, it's hard to beat his merciless hatchet jobs in chapters such as "Pitfalls and Dead Ends," "More Chuckleheads," "Microcosmic Moskowitz," "Half-Bad Writers," and the classic "A.E. Van Vogt: Cosmic Jerrybuilder." Dig it up.

Well, gang, it's Hugo nominations time again. Who cares if you've heard me say it before: the names which make it onto the final ballot are determined by an amazingly small number of votes. Iggycon published the spreads for its Hugos; the five finalists for Best Fanzine received between 15 and 53 nominating votes. Best Artist nominees got from 11 to 23! So if you and I can persuade twenty or thirty members of the Boston Worldcon to nominate my favorite fanzine, Pyrotechnica, we can be sure of seeing it on the final ballot. About 500 to 600 nominating ballots are sent in, but most of them ignore the more obscure categories. Hardly more than a softball team is required to put the artist of your choice on the list. BUT YOU'VE GOT TO SEND IN THOSE NOMINATIONS! Think about it. Then mail 'em tomorrow. A nomination for Pyro would be one more way to put GT on the map, fandomwise.

Remember, too, that you can nominate up to five in any category. So not all of them need be stories or people you'd give a Hugo to, but rather those you think might be deserving of a chance, especially if they won't be named by many other fans. Here's how mine line up:

Best Novel-- For the first time in a long time this has been a good year for novels. Clarke's Fountains of Paradise, Varley's Titan (flawed but fulfilling more of his potential than O. Hotline did), and Pohl's Jem are all obvious. I am skipping Jem because everybody will nominate it. Phyllis Henstein published her graceful Sorcerer's Son this year. Niven's Ringworld Engineers, otherwise a hot contender, ain't eligible because of the January cover date of its last Galileo installment. You hard-science freaks might salve your impatience by nominating Charles Sheffield's Web Between the Worlds, though it's not good enough in my opinion. Tullie and Rance recommend Spinrad's The World Between, though I haven't read it. Spinrad must have some great novels in him somewhere. My vote for the Hugo itself, though, will go to Zelazny's Roadmarks. It's not perfect, but it holds traces of the Old K., who has been off in Shadow all these years while Roger Hacked Out. Perhaps, like Lord Siddhartha or Shingo of Darktree Tower, Shrigger of Thunders, he will again walk among us.

Short Fiction-- I haven't read the magazines such this year, or many original anthologies, so I haven't come up with anything special here. (I suppose "home on Lagrange" is eligible, though...)

Best Pro Editor-- See short fiction. Maybe Galileo deserves your consideration for the strides it's taken lately. Hell, they just bought Galaxy! And don't forget the poor editors of book publishers. They're always ignored at Hugo time.

Best Non-Fiction book-- "relating to the field of sf or fantasy..." The stupendous Science Fiction Encyclopedia should take this one, but I'm also naming Asimov's autobiography In Memory Yet Green and Hofstadter's monumental Gödel, Escher, Bach, which relates not only to sf and fantasy but to everything else. Harlowe's Guide to Extraterrestrials? Del Rey's history? Who knows? A category whose time has come.

Best Dramatic P.-- Bonsheads will nominate Black Hole and Star Trek; Alien was well done and will probably take it. But what about the pilot

Roses-----three

for Salvage: One? Or Time after Time? Or Moonraker, pure entertainment with decent SF elements? (Hard science, too, as these things go in Hollywood.) Hitchiker's Guide did not, I am told, air a new series last year, but we might nominate the rumored Christmas episode.

Pro Artist-- Gotta give a nod to Wayne Barlow; see my MC's to Greg Ruffa. We'll see more of Wayne. As usual, John Berkey is my choice. How about Paul Alexander? David Egge? Is Joan Hanke-Woods now a pro?

Fan Artist-- my favorite category. We have so many damn good ones. How about my under-recognized buddy, Kurt Erichsen? This year he did the cartoons in the Louisville program book, and he's the designer of the familiar "Gernsback'd Gorillas" Moopsball team shirt. Another popular shirt was "Clint Priestwood: Vatican Death Commando" which, like my Motie and so many other beautiful things, is the work of Mary Lyn Skirvin. Chris Cloutier is the creator of Clint himself and has knocked out some very fine stuff this year. When is Alexis Gilliland, the manic Baltimore cartoonist for Dick Geis's SFR, getting the Hugo? He's deserved so long? Then there's Todd Johnson, Gretchen Van Dorn, Alice Insley, Doug Rice, Mary Jean Holmes... Look, if you don't vote for your friends, who will?

Best Fanzine-- Who reads fanzines? I have no illusions about winning a Hugo, but I think PyroTechnics deserves a place on the ballot with the best of 'em. Otherwise, like prozines, fanzines have mostly escaped my notice this year. I'll leave the other four slots to folks who know the field. But there must be more to life than Science Fiction Review and Locus!

Best Fan Writer-- It might be fun to name George Ewing and Chuck Ott. Does Bob Forward count?

Campbleellelell Award-- I'm open to suggestions and/or bribery.

Gandalf-- the novel award has vanished, leaving only the soporific Grand Master Award-- since previous winners are ineligible, eventually everybody will have one. The same nominees, minus one, seem to pop up every year. I guess I'm rooting for Le Guin and Zelazny on this one. Maybe Peter Beagle? Screwball nomination: Larry Niven...

I find this more fun, actually, than voting on the final ballot. The field is wide open, you get more than one equal choice, your vote has much more influence, and my idiosyncratic favorites often don't get on the final ballot anyway. Try it yourself, and really send it in this year.

Speaking of Worldcons, I've asked Noreascon to send me an application for a meeting room. I plan to hold the GT meeting sometime after 2 pm Saturday, after we're all awake and fed, with Sunday as our backup. Let me or Jeff Duntemann know if you have any ideas for GT activities at the con.

Marty Massoglia also mentioned that he might get an official room for an East Lansing party and even chair an E.L. panel. Damn! I still owe him a copy of "Tie Me Bandersnatch Down, Sport."

"The Egg of the Phoenix and Friends" will be entering the trivia bowl once more, with a new lineup: Barry Gehm (the Egg himself), Doug Van Dorn, Bill Leininger, and yr. obt. svt. Many of you did very well at Whatcon and Windycon; why not put together teams yourselves? I'd like to see the Midwest well represented. You need to register your team in advance, with membership numbers, and preferably by 1 March. Send your roster to Mike Smith, c/o Noreascon.

Not much space to discuss NBC's six-hour Martian Chronicles. Without having read the "novel," it struck me as a good TV adaptation of TMC, but a lousy story generally. I was reminded all over again why I gave

Rene-- You worry too much about membership. People are still joining the apa, and plenty of pages were submitted. I, too, prefer Apa-ratus (ApaRatus?) to Apa-tech.

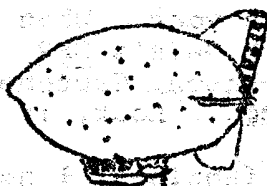
Steve-- Literate though I am, I don't have to like Joseph Conrad. I was delighted to study literature in high school and college once I discovered that you don't have to deal with symbolism to do it.

I should point out here in print that none of the alternatives to the coaxial mass driver seem to me practical for basement experimenters. They all require either superconducting technology or gargantuan power supplies. I'd rather build the MIT Mark I with whatever improvements-- such as Jerry Corrigan's power supply--we can add.

The demise of the legendary Phantom Milkshake was sad. Odd that with all the time I spent in Rensselaer I never encountered it.

Donna--What about Windycon 5?

Lemon Lift  
is a pretty  
strange name  
for a tea.



Jamie-- Odd to find an unashamed Trekkie. How did you manage to survive? I'd better explain before I become too offensive:

A large number of the fen I know entered fandom [as I did] just after the Great Trekkie Backlash of '75. We still have the uneasy feeling that you're not allowed even to admit that you like Star Trek. ("Why? Who's stopping you?" Agents of the SMOF, of course.) A few are still devoted to the show, in a clandestine way, but fear they'll be ostracized if they show any enthusiasm. One, in the privacy of his own bathroom, still dries himself off on his Enterprise beach towel... So it's only a hangup some of us suffer. Be gentle with us; we're just not liberated yet...

For years I've been saying that bringing ST back was a bad idea, because the show was essentially mined out-- witness the garbage that was aired the third season-- and that the money and talent would be better employed on projects of equal or better quality. But I may have been wrong. In the interval Roddenberry has made and failed to sell four decent pilots. Money and/or talent has given us The Starlost, Space: 1999, Galactica, the Man from Atlantis, and Buck Rogers. The movies have done a little better: Silent Running, Dark Star, Star Wars, CE3K. But a lot of turkeys have crept in there, too.

If I was wrong about ST, the question remains: How do you get good SF on the screen? Somehow I still feel that bringing back our old, tired favorites isn't the answer.

Misha-- O, encode his knotty boa-zone murmur.

Doug-- Alien was nicely done, but I don't really enjoy horror movies. Also, it had too much fake suspense of the funny-noise-in-the-basement variety. By now you've heard the rumor that the sequel will add excitement by having two cats aboard.

Valli-- Your left-hand margins are too narrow. But you have a nice smile.

Dick-- Beam Hoked on Continuum Zero Story...

Greg-- Actually, two Saturn probes inside a year seem pretty extravagant to me. Especially considering the rate at which new planetary probes are likely to report in during the eighties. Look at it this way: You must only wait for 3.4% of a Saturnian year, or about the same fraction as twelve days of Terra's year.

(Hmm. That last calculation strikes me as smacking of the old "One year for a dog equals seven years for a person" hogwash. Would people on Saturn age more slowly? Or would less frequent winters and birthdays have little effect on everyday life? Is Saturn populated by dogs?)

Is it superfluous to say I'd like to see your animated stars? I've always had the sneaking impression that they zigzag around the Hertzsprung-Russell diagram like spent balloons. Would be nice to see a more accurate picture.

Barlowe's Guide is very impressive. I don't agree with all his interpretations, nor is his quite the list of aliens I would have drawn up, but what a project! His Mesklinites have two pincers fore and two aft; I'd hold out for more. And nobody shows Mesklinites with eyestalks. Maybe they don't have eyestalks. I've always drawn 'em that way: Perhaps I'll go consult Mission of Gravity again...

Bill-El-- Duck Buoy Rams Neo Zither Monotone (sounds like some kind of waterborne filksing!)

Keith-- I also missed the Fairer Sex in grad school. You Knew The Job Was Dangerous When You Took It. Don't give up! You'll just have to seek them harder elsewhere.

I recall the Billy Goat Tavern well. How about an expedition next Windycon? Rapidographs are great, but I can never get mine to work properly.

Have you settled on a name for your house? How about Tycho Under? Barad-Dur? Bit Bucket? Fortress of Solitude? Lattice Site? Ironman One? We Made It? The Hill? Diaspar? Mission Control? Scattering Center? Cinnabar? The Phantom Zone? Eternity? Starfleet Command? Dr. Beddoes' Pneumatic Institute? Ground Zero? Terminus? or Star's End?

Alice & Mike-- I seem to recall that W liked your postmailing, but I can't find it. Lost Your Zine, SO No Comment Hooks.

theewallsee@have@ears@! (cont'd from three)

up reading Bradbury so many years ago. Yes, you have to give up all hope of scientific accuracy with a Bradbury story. But it seems you must also forego logic, consistency, normal human reactions, all verisimilitude, and perhaps the use of your reason. I'm sure it didn't help that the novel was convolved with Richard Matheson's screenwriting. The special effects were mostly miserable, though I liked the design of some of the rockets and other vehicles.

Zum Beispiel: in the last scene, where Bradbury's hero shows the children their reflections in the canal ("There are the Martians," a scene I liked), the producers didn't even try, dammit, to show us reflected images in the water. Instead they superimposed a shot of the surface of a pool upon a shot of the characters. Worst of all, IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE TAKING PLACE AT NIGHT!!! Idiocy.

The Martians are lucky they have no ears, so they don't have to listen to the speeches everyone is making. This must be science fiction-- the trucks make funny noises. Why did the Martian vanish when he died? What killed the NATO guys in WW III without disturbing the control room? Phasers? How do you know a Martian died of the chicken pox, or how long he's been dead, if you've never seen one? If Mars is like Illinois, why not tell Houston?



# Tales from the Charmed Sea<sup>#5</sup>

(c) 1980 Keith Thorne

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A journal of scintillating dissertation and spark-ling wit courtesy of Another Half-Baked Production Publications, Keith Thorne editor.

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[Note: The following contains much rationalization and emotion-letting, but please bear with me.] Since the beginning of February my worldline has disappeared down a black hole and has not reemerged. Where it will reappear is now in the hands of the great god Finagle. Bah! Enough of this bush-beating! It is time to say it loud and say it proud! I FLUNKED THE QUAL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! This was my second and last chance at it, so after I complete my Master's this semester, I will be asked to leave the department. I continue to display a calm exterior but inside I feel like eating 30 Cylons and spitting out the IC's. [Cawd! He even jokes about his depression. This boy needs help!] A number of options are available to me. I can apply to physics departments at other schools, I can change departments, or I can go find a job. To me, my decision is a difficult but necessary one. I must dive into the stream of worldly endeavors. It is time to experience the "real" world, in all its aspects. My whole life has been spent as a student, more specifically a student of physics. In high school my only job was two-and-a-half years as a library page at the local library. As an undergraduate, I worked for two physics research groups part-time, and full-time during the summers. The past two years have been spent as a physics grad student. I have no perspective, no criterion upon which to decide if this is

what I want to do for the rest of my life. As a teenager, I had always felt that I wanted to be a physicist. I believe I chose it because it was the only thing that was difficult for me, and that made it interesting. Did I make the right choice, or did I jump too soon, and closed myself off from other just as rewarding endeavors? Reassurances by others are not enough. I must gather my own information and make my own decisions. Of course, if I don't, there will always be someone willing to make them for me. Some of you may feel that this is an absurd attitude, that I am forsaking physics for the almighty dollar, that the real world is not worth the effort, that it is cruel and heartless and it is silly to think otherwise. I counter that, as I stated above, I must find this out myself, and that I am still young (22), and can go back to physics anytime I wish to, albeit at a different and probably less prestigious department. If I cared about prestige, I would have gone to Yale or MIT, instead of Moose U. And besides, why shouldn't I be paid what I am worth for once? I've paid my dues as a grossly underpaid computer jock and researcher. I am damn good at a lot of very useful things and deserve those bucks. All I ask is a little support in these uncertain times of mine and no shedding of tears for "Keith Thorne, Physicist".

As to what jobs I am considering, well, I am at the stage of "Make me an offer. I'll try almost anything once". But seriously, I am looking at many possibilities. Being an avid space nut, I figure "Why not go into satellites?". The fields of satellite communications, signal and data processing and construction all interest me. ComSat, the satellite people (They own almost all of them), are looking for people to look into ion thrusters, solar cells, nickel-iron batteries (their invention), besides just building the damn things. They are in Washington, D.C. Or I could go to the West Coast and work for Hughes or TRW or other similar firms. Perhaps Fairchild's satellite communications group. The only problem with these is that they are either on the East Coast or in California. Personally, I prefer to be laidback rather than stuckup. Of course I could resolve this by staying in the Midwest. I hear that Bell Labs in Naperville is desperate for people. There are always the oil companies looking for people to analyze seismic data by computer. It is almost too many choices. Now begins the placement process. I need to make up my resume, send off letters, and start calling personnel directors, and don't forget the interviews. Along with this I still have one course (now changed to an analog electronics lab) and shuttling back and forth to Fermilab. Its going to be hectic for a while. Thus begins my great adventure!

The following is intended to alleviate any feelings that some might have that this will cause me to forsake fandom for the mundane world. This is just not true. I see you people more often than I do my own family. Between three years in East Lansing, two years in Urbana, and my family moving while I was in college, fandom is about the only shred of continuity left in my life. I will need this

circle of friends even more while I am adjusting to a new place and job. What my final status in the fannish sphere will be, I can not say with certainty, but fandom is now too much of my life to throw it all away. Besides, how can I break my string of Windycon attendances, which now stands at four?

We now return you to your regularly scheduled apa . . .

MAILING HAILINGS - LEVEL I

Cover - Very nice! Obviously Phil did the lettering, as the word "view" is misspelled as "veiw".

555 Times - Apa-ratus stinks. Leave the name as APA-TECH or I leave.

Steve - Being one of the resident physicists of GT, I pledge my aid on the theoretical end to the mass driver project. [I always was a sucker for pipe dreams that people told me were a lead pipe cinch.] As for technical aid and equipment, the monkey wrench recently tossed into my life (See above) has rendered me unable to commit myself to much of anything right now. Keep the info flowing and I will respond when possible.

Donna - First issue nice but much too short. Watch out for Bill C. , though, you never know what he will do next. He might make learn all of 'Stan Long'.

Dick - Just how fannish is Datalogics going to get? Will it reach a critical concentration of Midwest fans and collapse in a heap of silliness? Don't you and Valli give up so easily! Any relationship worth forming is worth fighting for.

Jamie - Another first-timer! San Diego sounds like an interesting place. Never been farther west than Fermilab myself. Just out of curiosity, are you a student or do you get your kicks from a boss? In either case, where and doing what?

Greg - TWO contributions? You continue to shame me.

Bill H. - And you thought the halo muons would get you! Someone, I forget who, suggested that if we are going to build the mass driver vertically, that we launch a model rocket from it and try to break the sound barrier. What does the 'sonic boom' from a vertical projectile sound like anyway? I am too burnt out from the qual to do this calculation myself. I'm glad that you and Barry are getting the recognition you deserve. I saw your routine every Friday night, I should know.

Doug - RAEBNC

Valli - See my note to Dick. One of these days I am going to have to try that stream of consciousness style of writing. It looks so interesting. Speaking of sex: What, you believe everything you read? I am certain there are plenty of techies willing to dispel this ugly rumor. Want to come up to my room and see my pc board etchings?

Bill L. - That's THREE Bills already. I give up! Brush up that shaggy dog letter and send it off to Isaac's.

#### MAILING HAILINGS - LEVEL II

Steve - I don't know about anyone else, but I found the Mother Lode at Nasfic and filled a bathtub with it. I took the service elevators to the basement and there they were.

Dick - I didn't mean to imply that computer jobs couldn't be a grind. Along those lines, I believe that every sentient being has the inalienable right to bitch, so go ahead and vent your spleen. It probably needs it anyway.

What do you mean you'll never know who wrote it? [The one-shot] You were there! I'll give you a hint, though: I wrote a paragraph.

Mike S. - I refuse to respond to your inquiry about "virtual" this and "anti-" that, as they fall in the category of "done to death already".

Bill H. - In fact in the past three years two of the Nobel Prizes in Medicine have been awarded to physicists! This highlights a recent trend where, although physicists often leave physics for other fields, few people of other disciplines switch into physics. A whole spectrum of explanations presents itself, from physics being such a tough subject that only the dedicated can master it, through physics being much more general than any particular profession and generalists can become specialists but rarely vice versa, to physics being such a bad field, that almost everybody leaves it once they see the light. I don't have any such quick answers to this. Back to you, Bill.

Alice - That hits a little too close to home, my dear! Just because your four housemates, all Midwest baritones, sound the same on the phone, leading to much confusion, is no reason to condemn us. Renee failed to make me a member of Funny Hat Fandom, and you shall too!

Mike B. - Cop out!

#### BIAS FROM THE DIAS

Once again, the cold reality of the world threatens to impinge upon our happy fannish lives. The hostages in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan have threatened the

reinstitution of the draft, or at the very least registration. Seeing as how I missed having to register by five days in 1975, I have no desire to see it return. I reject the opinion that "What do you care? They are only doing it to 19 and 20-year-olds, which means you're safe". I find this even more repugnant than the feeling that being 21 or older frees one from caring about whether 18-to-20 year olds are able to drink. Reducing the age group is merely a way to make it more palatable for Congress and the people, so we can avoid having to confront the grim reality and possibly horrible outcome of these measures. The fewer people affected, the less opposition created, right? If the draft does ever come to pass, then NO EXEMPTIONS, PERIOD. The more politician's sons and daughters that die, the better. In olden times, the lord led his men to the war and fought with them, as he controlled the knights. He experienced, or at least observed, the horrors and agonies of battle, which made him very hesitant to ever enter into armed conflict. Now, those that govern are always far removed from the battlefield. Thus new methods of bringing the reality of war home to them must be found.

An interesting sidelight is the fate of the drafted techie. We might eliminate sex and class discrimination from deciding who goes where, but how many people with a technical background do you think are ever going to see a front line? The armed forces are desperate for computer jocks, communications types and the like. They need them just to keep the whole war machine from collapsing. Is it fair that the intelligent ones are spared cannon fodder duty? If all other criteria for discrimination are removed, is it right to retain this one? This concern could be unfounded, as the tactics of modern war include trying to knock out the headquarters and communications networks by missile, which means techs could suffer just as much as the cannon-fodder.

#### NOVEL HOVEL

I just got my copy of the widely-touted "Science Fiction Encyclopedia" edited by Peter Nicholls. Golly gosh and gee willikers(?) even Harlan Ellison fell over himself praising this tome in a review for the college newspaper insert "Ampersand". A tome it is at that, at 672 pages it has everything from Aandahl, Vance to Zulawski, Jerzy and runs \$12.95 pb(10" by 6 3/4") and \$24.95 hc. I have only just begun to look at it, but it appears that the glowing reports are justified. It has large sections devoted to themes in SF i.e. Aliens, Genetic Engineering, Fandom, Terraforming. It gives a decent description of Fandom, Fan language and Fanzines. It looks like a good source for trivia buffs. It also has entries for any movie even remotely science-fictional and also for any directors of said films. Ah well, there's no accounting for taste I suppose. It looks like a very fine effort.

## PERS PERUSE

A number of you seem to feel that my avowed identity crisis visavis being mistaken for Tullio, Higgins, etc. is merely my reaction to my non-entity status in fandom. This may very well be a major part of it, but how many of you suffered being asked, for the umpteenth time "Are you two brothers?" with reference to your college roommate? I was 5'8" and 160 lbs, he was 6'1", 220 lbs and of decidedly different personality. Arrrgh!

As for when people might see me next, my plans appear to put me at Fermilab at least some Thursdays all the way through March, April and into May. As for whether I can make it to Thursday night at those times is to be seen. My con schedule is a maybe for Minicon (how can I pass up a con on my birthday?) and a pretty definite WhatCon. To locate me, look for the clean-shaven NMF-type wearing my body. That's right, the fuzz is gone, at least until after the interview season. If you thought I looked mundane before, you ain't seen nothin'. I've also got contacts! This led to the humorous situation of an acquaintance of mine showing up at my office who was ignorant of this change staring me right in the face and inquiring "Excuse me, but do you know where Keith Thorne is?"

## NOTES AND QUOTES

It definitely appears that being a techie and getting a PhD are mutually exclusive, as my bid to break this trend has just been blown out of the water. Am I right, or is someone out there gunning for their PhD?

I get this feeling that I am the token WASP of GT. Any pretenders to the throne?

Alice just got her hair cut, and guess who now is the indisputable champ of the Angel look-alike contest?

I've coined a term for the style of writing found in the Illuminatis Trilogy, where the depth of detail and unannounced narrative shifts threaten to overwhelm the person who reads too closely - "flood of consciousness".

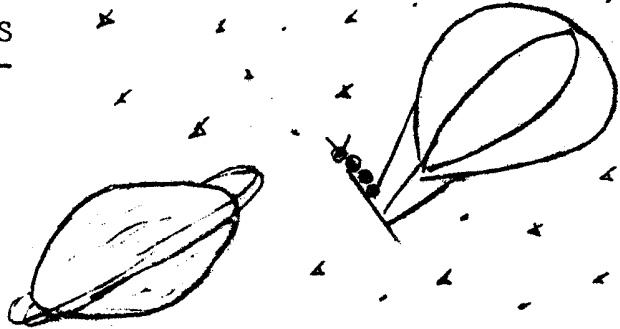
Old airplanes were said to be held together with chewing gum and bailing wire. High energy physics experiments are held together by five-minute epoxy and cable ties.

Fandom finally rates! The word "fanzine", coined by Russ Chauvenet in 1941, is now in the august Oxford English Dictionary, by fiawol!

And thus ends another issue of the not-ready-for-prime-time perzine "Tales from the Charmed Sea"

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The year dawned slowly and with us and the house intact. Isher-Con came, lasted for four days, and went. Not that it didn't have its bangs. It wasn't like the first party. Then the idea was new and people were looking forward to it. The mylar tape was a spontaneous idea as were the antennae. There was the infamous butter joke. And the group seemed younger and less jaded. Still, this year's party was no less gala. There was twice as many people and twice as much food. Alex and John Babbin had gotten in Wednesday. I arrived Thursday night having missed my train as usual and Tullio arrived early the next day. We then commenced the cleaning of ~~the/Skyline/Skyline~~ the house.

Saturday morning Bill Leininger showed up on our doorstep. We were still cleaning so we let him to take a nap. By 3 pm there were about half a dozen people that I sent out with Tullio on the Meijer's department/ grocery/ hardware store Tour which gave me more time to clean. By the time the tour group came back, waving munchies (and butter) in hand they were greeted by about 20 people. And they were hungry (ah, the festivities were just beginning). Capt. Al and his amazing spaetzl machine began turning out little worm-like noodles as we chopped up one of the two hams to add to the lentils that were already boiling merrily on the stove. I started heating up the spiced cider and Alex decided that we had to have French onion soup so he had to call up his dad and someone got sent out for beef stock. And the basement stove was fired up so that Ed could start preparing his Texas Kamakasi Chili. Meanwhile, Mary Lynn arrived with copies of THEY DON'T WRITE 'EM LIKE THAT, YET and as we stuffed our faces we marvelled at the songs and pictures.

The rest of the night was spent in talk, laughter, and song as we greeted those whom we'd hadn't seen in a month or two. A lot of time was also spent in trying to figure out where to put food and the clothes and the sleeping material that flooded our house like a deluge.

We were also treated by the first of Steve Salaba's movies. We saw a number of cartoons, part of Kentucky-Fried Movie, clips of Star Wars, and then HardWare Wars. Then we settled down to an enjoyable two hours of Woody Allen's PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM and lots of popcorn.

One by one (or two by two) people commandeered their sleeping spaces and slowly drifted off to a few comatose hours till it was time to party again.

Sunday began with the sweet smell of Martha Soukup's German Pancakes. Then about half the group got hustled off to winery tour in Paw Paw and the rest of us got to rest and talk. The tour group came back regaling us with stories of how they had harrassed the guide and made her ditties about the wine-making process a lot funnier than they had any right to be. Also they had come back with the strangest collection of wines I'd ever seen (mint-, peach-, and raspberry- FLAVORED wines??)

Sunday was also the day of the weird antennae. Mary Lynn had found some pipe cleaners and laid them out on the table. Naturally we attached them to our glasses. But some people were not satisfied with straight antennae. A curl would appear and then a coil. Then several branches and then suddenly Steve Salaba was sporting a pipe cleaner TV antenna jauntily off one ear. No holes remained barred after that. Someone made a butterfly, a transistor symbol, and Steve Johnson had a radar dish between his eyes. I rather liked mine (even though it was a bit ostentatious); the word Boss waving back and forth above my head.

That evening we ate spaghetti and Todd Johnson's venison and grape jelly meatballs. Mark Hyde showed up when we were almost finished with 6 or 7 3lb jars of spaghetti and a case of mushrooms. Well, better late than never. It was too late to use the sauce for that meal but it's February and we still haven't had to buy a jar of spaghetti sauce.

Later on Paula Smith's party joined ours for the movies and the tea party. Steve had set up a huge cinemascope screen for his surprise movie so we were all very curious as to what it could be. First we saw yet another segment from KENTUCKY FRIED MOVIE, this time A Fistful of Yen. Then we got the surprise: it started out with a black and white panorama of the the New York skyline and swelling up of the Gershwin music A Rhapsody in Blue. It was MANHATTAN! What a treat for me to see 2 Woody Allen movies in two days. We took an intermission in between reels to sample the dozen or so teas that people had brought. Some were pretty ordinary (Jasmine and the Celestial Seasonings' herb teas) but some of them (blackberry brandy flavor) even I wasn't bold enough to try.

The rest of the night wore on. We watched the movie, tried new kinds of tea, sang until Bill's fingers ached too much to continue, and sucked a lot of helium.

Something that I have not mentioned yet that went on during the entire party: the helium balloons. Tullio had procured a tank of helium for the duration so it seemed like the best time to see what we could fly and what could cause the loudest explosions. The first launchings were simple affairs: Tullio or some interested party would launch one or more balloons with as much mylar tape as possible. These would either fly to great heights till they became invisible and get tangled up in some tree or power line far away or would tangle themselves up in a tree immediately. The next stage was filling them up with oxy-



acetylene gases and fuses that made quite satisfactory bangs. I am surprised that we didn't attract the police about the noise because they were LOUD. (We or rather Mark attracted the police when he was shining his laser rifle out in the fog that existed the entire party. Apparently a surveying laser had been stolen and they had thought that his laser might be the stolen one. Mark pointed out to them that his rifle didn't really resemble a surveying laser and why would he be playing with it in the open if he had stolen it?) The last phase of the ballooning was the sending up of various radar targets and gadgets to interfere with people watching New Year's football games.

Fortunately, the helium wasn't all being wasted going up into the atmosphere. We had another insidious use for it. A few of us would go down into the basement where the cylinder was located and fill up several large balloons. Then we'd go back upstairs, rejoin the clump of people in the living room filksinging and distribute the wealth. We'd start singing Penson, AZ and when the chorus came up we'd take a deep drag from the balloons and suddenly the room would be filled with the sound of 30 midgets singing Penson, Arizona, the warm wind thru your hair, etc. and go on to Throw away your TV, move to the country, buy you a home, raise a lot of peaches, and suck a lot helium. A few people thought they were getting high off the helium but we think it was oxygen depravation. (Or maybe the gas is a drug on the planet that they come from.)

Monday, New Year's Eve, the day of the great feast, began with the smell of hash and fried eggs. I booted about a half dozen out the door to go on the second Heijer's tour. Around 3pm our neighbor wanted to get her car out of the garage but Al's car was blocking the driveway. Al was not to be found. We tried pushing the car (a Honda) onto the street but it was in gear. Finally, we went into the house, dragged everyone away from the marathon filksing, all got around the little car, picked it up and slid it onto the driveway next to ours. The neighbor looked at us very strangely, got into her car, and sped away. She thought us odd. To us it was just great fun.

The next 4 hours were a blur of fixing the big dinner: cooking 2 turkeys and the big honey-baked ham, the vegetables, heating breads, making the salad (which Isher parties are always famous for) and the O'hoerdoerves (which got eaten as soon as they were made), setting out the cheeses, and finding a safe place to put the cake. And finally stuffing ourselves until we could eat no more. For two hours after that we rested our poor stomachs.

As midnight approached we readied ourselves by getting armed with laser, fireworks, and champagne (and our coats which many people neglected to their dismay last year). Then we assembled outside and prepared for the coming of 1980. It came, and right on schedule the balloon exploded as did the fireworks. Tullio, Alex, and I grabbed the bottle that we saved from last party and rechristened our house. Then we raised our glasses and wished everyone a Happy New Year and Happy New Decade. And we started to sing Auld Lang Sine. It may be corny but that's

the happiest moment of the party for me: seeing all my friends gathered around me singing that old song. At that moment all the preparations and the organizing and the worrying were worth it. I just hope that some others felt the same way.

Tuesday was like the end of all other ~~parties/years/last four/days~~ cons. We watched them go, making sure they had the right sleeping bags, matched pots and cooking utensils with the owners, tore down the mylar tane that littered EVERYTHING, said our good-byes, and wished it could last a little bit longer.

The final person left and we started the enormous task of cleaning up and getting ourselves used to a regular routine and making rayguns and fending off the depression that comes after sharing your home and moments with 40 people for four days. Alex and Tullio went to work and I grabbed the broom and we guessed that the party really was over. Tullio came back that evening and told us that he'd found something (God, perhaps?) Driving from work about ten miles from home he had spotted a balloon with its 50 foot tail stuck in a power station. One of the lighter-than-air creatures that we figured we'd never see again. That heartened us a great deal. Maybe the party wasn't completely over. Maybe its memories were like all the balloons we had sent up. Most of them disappeared into the blue but one or two lingered. At least for a while.

#### MAILING COMMENTS ON APA-TECH #4

SINGULARITY TWO/ Steve: Thanks for the praise about the apa. (As you can see, I feel a little bit responsible for the quality.) There are more literate apas than this one; in fact we'd probably be labelled poor ignorant electron pushers by the more esoteric ~~slows~~ fans out there.// About the mass driver: I'm all for projects that bring groups closer together and this is certainly one of them. We can provide the machine-shop facilities (you were just waiting for us to volunteer, weren't you, Steve?) and the time. I think questions that should be asked are, "Who will provide the direction for this project?", "Who will break the project up into small managable mini-projects?", and "Who will see that able bodies get together with the resources, materials, and machines?" I admit that in any problem I immediately look for the managerial questions, but in groups larger than 3 you start to have logistics problems. And we're talking about a lot of hands. If you want to take charge I think that several mini-berzerkers can be arranged, and some at our house during the late spring and summer. We have the technology (now we need 6 million dollars), the know-how, and some of the facilities and materials. Now all we need is ~~you~~ a leader to organize and bolster interest when it begins to wane. I'll be a happy follower and saw as many boards or solder as many terminal strips as you need. I think there are a lot of unskilled hands out there who would gladly work (used loosely) a weekend or two to do this and thus feel that he/ she belongs in the organization

and is not just a shiggy or a codder. General Technics needs to be reminded of its origins. It's a group of technically and scientifically oriented people and not just a social group (what it's not a social group?) Renaissance Software is another effort to bring the group back to its beginnings but I'll let Alex explain that one to you.//

Once again the marriage = gafiation discussion. I think you overestimate my reaction to your getting married. It's not that I disapprove of it (not at all) or that I think that as soon as you get hitched you'll disappear from sight. It's just that I'm worried. Grant me that. A bunch of my friends have disappeared into absolute obscurity since they've gotten married. And as I think about, it's not that they begin to look inward and become more insular instead of looking outward. It's true that society has no good place for the friends one has prior to marriage. These people are looked upon as wife stealers or husband stealers. And lest you scoff at the notions that society has any control of you and that you are a fan-- somehow insulated from its dictates-- think of who has more control over not what you think but your emotions. Is it the friend you see every two months or the mundanes you work with every day. You may respect the former's judgement more but it's the latter with the whisper of a comment, the uplifted eyebrow, or more importantly, the boss who controls your work and how you appear in the eyes of your superiors that seeps in through the cracks of your psyche and can wear you down. Insidious, isn't it? (Sounds real good on paper, at least.)

But, as I said, it's not really that. It's the sheer time/energy of forming a marriage, finding a place to stay, and getting settled in a job that makes a couple vanish. While in high school or college you have the idea that you have all the time in the world to finish projects, do crazy schemes, have many occupations. But when you get out (or get married) all this evaporates. You're tied down to your job, the house needs to be worked on, you have to visit your wife; whatever the reason it prevents you from driving the hundreds of miles to see your friends. And in fandom relationships are sometimes so fragile. It seems to be such a paradox that in fandom people get so close and the ties are strong and intense and yet someone can get out of touch so easily. You're lucky because you're surrounded by fans so you won't be totally isolated. Yet wasn't there a time when you were a lot closer to the fans in Chicago, to us? Do you have the energy to maintain these relationships (and I'm not talking about the I-forgot-your-name feeling because that would not happen in your case, I think. Rather, I'm talking about the We-feel-like-strangers feeling or I'm-on-the-inside-but-I-really-feel-on-the-outside feeling) or do they seem to be slip-sliding away? I'm still your friend and will remain so after you are married but we are becoming strangers. (Fortunately, the intensity of conventions can remove that. But being out of touch causes a lot of strangeness in a lot of friendships That takes time to erase and there's only so much time in a convention.) Sigh. I didn't mean to be so dismal. I don't

think that you'll gaffiate when you get married. But things will never be the same as they once were. And that's the really sad part.

Enough for being morose.

OUTER DARKNESS/ Donna: Welcome to the apa. Sorry I had you down as To Be Dropped if you didn't contribute to this ish. Actually, your cover counts as a one page contribution so you would have remained a member. And now that I think of it, you did an additional page this ish so the two count as 2 pages so you don't have to contribute to the next mailing (now she's going to minac...) Write more so I have something to comment on!

SMITH'S CORONA/ Dick: Well, my ditto repro was bad two issues ago but as I said before, blame Tullio (and blame this new paper we're getting from Paper Point. Seems to be thinner.)// How are we going to afford an ad in OMNI? My Ghod, they have whiskey and cigarette ads! It might be a good place to advertise (even though we'd be deluged by orders), sort of like advertising the Model X in PENTHOUSE. We've already been undercut by far more fancy stuff than you describe. Sure they look terrible, but they have light, sounds of various types, IR LED's, microprocessors (although those are in the more expensive models), etc. But there will always be those out there who want a high quality raygun.//

I started to read the the new Heinlein story in OMNI but I stopped when I read the line "They are rather large, aren't they?" which the girl (sic RAH) at the party states. That was enough for me.//

My rabbit is not only interested in Beautiful Young Ladies, but in anything else that moves (like cats or dogs).

westech/ Jamie: Welcome to the apa. Sorry you're getting this one so late. We'll (Tullio, Alex, myself, and perhaps Bill Colsher) be going to WesterCon this year so maybe we can all get together and raise some Cain (and you can show us around?)//

Why did Gene Roddenberry do it? Why did he select such a Horrible script? I wonder how much control he had over the selection procedure or whether the original script wasn't wittled down by the bigwigs. With all that money involved special effects (and lots of them) became mandatory and any semblance of a plot got squeezed out due to time. I think that's there's the belief among the people who finance and manage the movie business that the only reason we go to sf movies is for the effects and that we're either so blown away or are so stupid that we won't notice that there's no plot line. Everyone knows that sf is nothing but space battles, big spaceships (BFAS), and gosh---wow effects. And that we still drool over pulp covers that pic-green BEM's and well-endowed young women.//

Re ct SEG: USIL refers to Unidentified Statement in Line, a zine that may or may not be continued depending upon whether Alex can make it back into the apa.

YOUNG AND ABROAD IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM/ Misha: (funny, you don't look like a broad.)

The big question is how, legally, can you drive a car? That car sounds as bad as ours.// I've considered brown for holsters but I've never found anything that looks nice and is yet thin enough to be sewn on my machine. I'd like to make them out of clear so that you could see the gun while it's in the holster (which is most of the time) but I can't think of how to make them without having them appear cheap.// RAEBNC

THE QUINTESSENTIAL SINGULARITY/ Greg: The music of the spheres (an aside: does that phrase refer to the planets themselves or the spheres that were supposed to hold the planets in place in the geocentric universe concept?) is very interesting. It's too bad that the only planet that is vocally feasible (and interesting) is Mars. Earth notes (high G# and G) can be reached by a practicing mezzo- or soprano. Still it would make for good synthesizer music, with clicking or humming sound on the bottom, Mars and the Earth on the middle (in the key of G) and Venus and Mercury providing a high pitched wailing on top. Has music been composed for this yet?// I like Barlowe's mesklinite even though it doesn't have eyestalks as Higgins seems to think it needs. Evolutionarily, eyestalks have appeared on arthropods to give them a bigger visual field (to hunt better, avoid predators, and generally survive better to the mating season) where otherwise all they could see would be a couple of inches or less. What would be like not to be able to see as we do: a whole room, or 15 feet to each side, or hundreds of feet in front of us. Even with the eyes placed as they are, (four eyes, one each on the 4 triangles formed by the cross-shaped mouth) I think that a 7" mesklinite could only at most see a foot or two in front of it. If you think otherwise it'd be fun to argue. With eyestalks the mesklinite could certainly see a lot further but in 700 gravities I wouldn't want my eyes flapping around on flimsy appendages. Still, a question might be where on the planet did the mesklinites evolve? If they first evolved under 7 gravities and then have adapted to 700 gravities, maybe they could have developed eyestalks. But if they evolved under 700 gravities and then migrated, well, another partly baked idea. More on this in future issues (while I look up in my evolutionary ecology books to see if they have a reason for the development of the bloody things. The problem is that small insects don't have to worry about gravity because they have such little mass.)

OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD/ Doug: I like SUPERMAN so much because of the Leslie Bricusse song, If You Could Read My Mind. If only I could remember the names of all the other songs he wrote. But that was a long time ago when I was singing a lot more frequently. Also, I liked Chris Reeve.

I agree with you on the uplifting emotional value of the film and I think more weight should be put on whether a film makes you feel good. It made me feel better than when I entered the theatre. Unfortunately, it was eligible last year.

I really enjoyed TIME AFTER TIME. It was an amazingly tender movie of a Victorian man finding love with a liberated woman. The vignettes of his experience with the world of the 70's contrasted with his ideas of the utopia it was supposed to be was sometimes delightful and sometimes sad. It was also a surprisingly bloody move for its tenderness. The only thing that bothered me (outside of the solar-powered time machine in the dark basement) was the paradox of the machine being in two places at once. How could it take the villain to the future, exist in the future, and simultaneously exist in the past, where it travels to 'pick up' the hero to take him back to the future? Paradoxes aside, I'd vote for it over ALIEN (but then, I've always liked happy movies over horror movies.)

THE BLACK HOLE has it all over METEOR for being the worst movie of the year. I could get to like Karl Maudlin's mud--stained face sooner than I could stomach Capt. Nemo playing his androidal organ up and over the event horizon.

DR. GONZO'S ECLECTIC EMPORIUM/ Valli: I seem to recall a banquet held in an obscure restaurant in Rantool that lasted 4 1/2 hours.// Unfortunately, the house isn't painted yet. Winter intervened when we had a few copices left to do. It should take us another two weeks in the spring and then we'll be finished.

GLEANINGS FROM THE DUSTBIN #1/ Bill L.: Welcome to the apa.  
comment on. Write more! Give us something to

TALES FROM THE CHARMED SEA/ Keith: Yes, Keith, you'd make a good Donald Hogan. But don't carry this looking like a mundane too far unless you want to use it as disguise to help you move better in society. I think that Tullio would make a better Chad Mulligan than Shalmaneser (though I can only see Mike Toman mouthing the words, "I love you, you sons of bitches!")

NOTHING IN GARB OUT/ Gordon: It's good to see that you're still in the apa ( by the grace of GTR.) Maintaining a long distance relationship is very similar to getting married and staying in fandom. It takes an enormous amount of energy to do it, sometimes more than you have for just surviving and keeping contact with your friends. And you seem to get so little reward for all the effort you put out. Sure, it's so good when you're together and it seems to erase all the pain that's accumulated, but when you're apart and hurt and need or are growing away from your love the energy you have to have to withstand the pain and to keep going on is tremendous. I know

that I couldn't do it. I know that you were trying very hard and had hoped that you'd have more luck. Why don't you come to the Midwest where there are lots of nice people here that you can drown your sorrows with.

THE FEARLESS MUBETIAN/ Mike: On your speculation as to who master-minded the one--shot: except for one person your ideas are like 5 (Right Out!). Heh, heh, heh.

MAILING COMMENTS ON APA-TECH #3

SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN/ Bill C.: A verrrry nice con report. Hope you have the stamina to do another one.// What is this about a place being too big to find friends (in reference to universities). Of course they can be or at least can discourage one from going out and looking. That may not stop you anyway. It didn't stop me; it may have even forced me to look since it was so big and cold and lonely and was trying so hard to stop me.

YOUNG AND ABROAD IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM/ Misha: What I liked the most about ALIEN was the aliens. I was afraid, in hearing about the movie, that the aliens would be somehow laughable, if not to the regular watcher then to the sophisticated viewer (although today's moviegoer is extremely cynical and critical. Even the slightest bit of laughter over the aliens would have destroyed the film.) But whoever designed them and constructed them was a genius and if each 'instar' of the alien was done by a different person(s) then he/she blended the designs so that there were no jarring differences in style. My favorites: the second incarnation that showed the development of the jaw on the extending vertebrae (the second incarnation appeared to no more than a sheath of flesh covering that jaw system and its organs) and that same thrusting jaw in the last incarnation. I hated the body of that last alien, however. It was nothing more than a left-over devil suit from some grade B exorcist movie painted gray to match the head which was an extraordinary piece of engineering. Anything would have been an improvement-- a couple more arms, pincers, hooves, scaly green skin, anything. Also there was no reason that the head had to contain the vertebrate lattice or that it would have to be rigid. The lattice could have curved into a slightly bulkier body eliminating the need for that huge head balanced on that tiny neck (probably the greatest casualties in the species occurs when something taps it on the shoulder and it snaps its neck looking behind it to see who it was.) Still, the aliens were a magnificent job and I'd see the movie again just to get a look at that alien octopus. And I'd like to see Ripley again. She was one neat lady.

Bye for now. Till next time. Happy teching!!

the other songs he wrote. But that was a long time ago when i was singing a lot more frequently. Also, I liked Chris Reeve.



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He may be right, looking at the fact that people seem to think that stack machines are easier to program than register machines.

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#### DOES THIS MAKE SENSE?

There was a person whose name was Isaac Edward Leibowitz, according to a Mr. Walter M. Miller Jr. in his book *A Canticle for Leibowitz* [1959]. In the story, A blueprint bearing the name of Mr. Leibowitz has the specifications for the construction of "A Transistorized Control System for Unit B-6" on it, a device that probably could be designed by any properly knowledgeable electronics technician.

((I WISH this program would hyphenate output!))

There was a war that wiped out most of civilization. Leibowitz survived a while, helping to hide several caches of books and magazines -- anything that contained knowledge and was worth hiding from a mob of book burners. Six Centuries later Leibowitz and anyone else capable of understanding the meaning of "A Transistorized Control System for Unit B-6" was long dead, but the surviving bundles of books that existed were taken care of by members of the Albertian Order of Leibowitz, a religious monastery.

The paper on which the circuit design was drawn was disintegrating. The finder of the document, Brother Francis Gerard a monk of the Albertian Order of Leibowitz, took the drawing, and with all the charm and artistic thunder he could gather, spent an enormous amount of time painstakingly duplicating and embellishing the cryptic symbols of the drawing onto parchment. The results of this work astounded the monk's superiors, who eventually sent Brother Francis to a place called New Rome, a far away town with even higher superiors, on an errand. Francis had taken with him the parchment that he spent so much time on.

It was stolen from him. He died trying to recover it.

In an apartment somewhere on or near the East coast of the United States, Dr. Isaac Asimov rapidly produced the short stories that soon became the *Foundation Trilogy*: *Foundation*, *Foundation and Empire*, and *Second Foundation*.

Asimov is both a fan and an author of science fiction, knowledgeable of the subjects of biochemistry, astronomy, and religion. He is an advocate of technological and scientific study. He is also somewhat familiar with the machinations of politics, and

the way other people act when they don't understand any or some technically inclined subjects.

In one of the stories of the *Foundation Trilogy*, religion is used as a peaceful weapon of the Foundation, a developing commercial force based on the planet Terminus, located at the rim of the galaxy. This religion uses technology and science as a deity, and depends on the ignorance of people that don't have an understanding of either.

The source of the ideas implemented by Dr. Asimov came from the history of the world from the beginning of recorded history to the events of the (then) present day.

There presently are some academic circles interpreting Asimov's use of religion in the *Foundation Trilogy* as being satirical. This seems to be like a modern day Francis Gerard, copying the contents of a book or document onto parchment with as much gold leaf as possible, not attempting to determine the content of that knowledge. The real meaning may be lost because much of the context of the original drawing, the stuff that is not written into the text (i.e. why the drawing was made and under what conditions), is forgotten ("...What, prey," he [Brother Jeris] asked, squinting over Francis' shoulder, 'is the meaning of "Transistorized Control System for Unit Six-B," learned Brother?'...").

It is the opinion of this writer that the story, as Asimov typed it, can be related accurately and completely, with all the content he intended, on a plain sheet of paper, in black and white, and that the presentation of religion in the story is not a satirical attack but a factual, accurate observation. The passage of time seems to have masked this reality from the later interpretations. Asimov is a skilled, true blue science fiction writer, particularly heavy on the speculation and light on satire in his stories. There seems the lack of belief that IF (remember that word?) a certain group of people, who collectively form something called the Foundation, were to attempt to peacefully control less sophisticated, rather hostile provinces by surrounding their vastly superior technological goshnow with a great deal of religious pomp and circumstance, that the THEN just might be what Asimov recorded in his stories. The use of religion is an intelligent, sneaky ploy that worked in the past, and may be occurring at the moment of this writing! It is not necessarily a satirical move to accurately reflect history in a science fiction story, right down to the devout feelings of the high priest on the VBS (Very Big Ship) given

to Anacreon by the mayor of the Foundation. The priest's words are equalled in emotional content by any speech by any well known evangelist, and is hence believable.

The fact that Asimov's use of religion is not satirical makes the story more meaningful. He is not going off in a sideways direction to assassinate religions, although there is the single comment in the text, "For it is the chief characteristic of the religion of science that it works, and such curses as that of Aporat's are really deadly." He is demonstrating that the tool is a powerful one and has been for centuries.

There is some indication that Asimov, in one of his latest science fiction novels, *The Gods Themselves*, is making a satirical comment about present theories of human psychology via the antics of the alien individuals in the story. There are also traces of biting commentary in his monthly essays in the magazine *Fantasy and Science Fiction* and other nonfiction, such as his basic science books and his letters to the editors of various magazines.

In an earlier work, *Nightfall*, Asimov seemingly has men of science battle against men of religion, as he does not treat the religion-based arguments kindly. In both the *Foundation Trilogy* and in *Nightfall*, however, Asimov has ignorant and narrowly thinking people fight intelligent, informed ones.

Asimov does not seem to dislike religion; he does, however, dislike ignorance a weapon much more terrible. Asimov, in his published works, is a champion of brains. It would be wrong for him to satirize religion, for there may be something to it after all. A scientist would not normally discount a theory unless he observed something to be not true, which is the case for several premises put forth by most organized religions. A scientist would, however, not believe a statement made by a person if that person makes a claim that something is utterly true and leaves it at that, without backing up the words with evidence. Such is not the way of the scientific method.

(( I think it is rather loosely organized, but I ran out of time this week to redraft it, and my printer has some deadly sickness. Oh woe is me. At any rate, feel free to hack away at this...))

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## MINERAL STATISTICS

It seems that we are going to have some difficulty with minerals in the near and far futures (as if we don't have it now).

Asbestos, Chromium, Fluorine, and Mercury will last in the US for another ten years, then we will run out.

Copper, Gold, Lead, Manganese, Nickel, Silver, and Tungsten will vanish from US mineshafts within 10 to 60 years.

The following materials fare better: Aluminum, Barite, Clays, Gypsum, Iron, Mica, Molybdenum, Phosphate, Sulfur, Thorium, Titanium, Uranium, and Vanadium should all last longer than 60 years.

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## SYSTEM WORKING...SORTOF

My Diablo has come and is making itself useful. Coupled with a subset of the C programming language, BDS C is allowing me to do things I could do only before in assembler. UCSD Pascal would not be fast enough, nor would any BASIC, and I refuse to program in FORTRAN on a microprocessor system.

The problem with Hytype I Diablos is that there are about four power transistors that occasionally like to go zonk. These transistors control the elaborate paper feed stepper motor (which is a piece of beauty to look at, if you have a strange sense of humor). Mine have apparently become intermittent, because the stepper motor sometimes makes horrible noises and skips steps. This makes nashish out of any printout. Sign.

The 68K project, Aspiring to Take Over The Computer World With Big Microprocessors, is in the process of locating places to make various sundry parts. We are looking for boxes, card cages, power supplies, etc. Oh what fun.

Niven is still GO at Whatcon II. Our Mr. Higgins has been declared Absent Guest of Honor, and will receive nothing if he shows up at the con.

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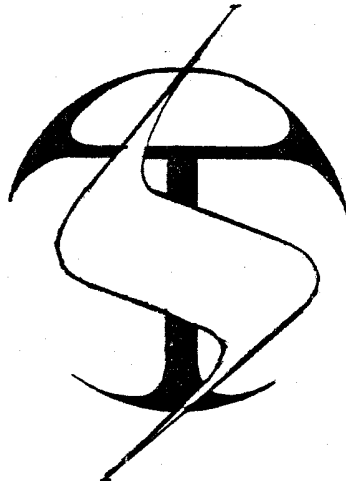
SATURN 3, Farah Fawcett Does it With Robots, by a member of the Sacrificial Lamb Committee.

Our motto: "Ours is not to reason why, it is to pay three bucks and sign..."

It was Ghod awful. Saturn was wrong. The orbits were wrong. The Sun was too big. There again was Noise, In Space. The lighting was completely fouled. The station looked like a big Alien set. Farah can act? Dimple was too pronounced. The Captain was very insane, and nobody that insane would get that far in

space. His was a case that would have been caught in the crib. The sets weren't complete losses. The movie looked like some idiot that graduated from Whatsamatta University was taught the fine art of Glossy prints. The arsenal of the station included two bombs and a laser, and there were plenty of wire clippers around. The bombs get used as the anticlimax to the flick. The laser is never used, never thought of. The main characters run wildly through the station, a supposedly high tech station, without weapons. The 'bot had so many pneumatic cables flowing outside the protection of the steel skin it defied logic. The robot's brain was definitely plastered with paris with copper wires stuck in it (the close-up told all). The director must have thought flying through the rings of Saturn (Bonk! Bonk! went the soundtrack) would be a very academic thing to do, because Everyone did it.

Faran never got to do it with the robot.



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## ANOTHER GENERATION OF MISTAKES?

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Much has been said about how each generation of computers the large mainframes, the minis, and now the micros - has repeated the mistakes of the past generation. There have even been comments on upward-compatibility mistakes in going from one generation of microprocessor to its succeeding generation(s). [1] I would like to take this further by commenting on the latest generation of microprocessors, the 16-bit CPUs.

I was talking to an EE who tried to convince me that the yet-to-be released microprocessors are "so much better" than the existing ones because they have included all of the addressing modes in each instruction. Among other things, I am told, this reduces program size and makes the micro run faster, since its speed is directly related to the number of fetches it must do per instruction and the number of instructions used. As a concept, in toto, I can only reply, BUNK!

If one were to design a microprocessor stack computer, [2] it would be possible to incorporate an instruction set that has only one multi-addressing mode instruction, a "load effective address" instruction. Since this is perhaps a bit austere, it may be realistic to add appropriate load to stack, store from stack, conditional and unconditional branch, and subroutine call instructions to the group of "addressed" instructions. The remaining instruction set need not contain more than 128 (if even that many) zero-address instructions. This instruction set can be arranged so that all zero-address instructions are 8 bits long. This means that most of the time an instruction word will contain two instructions, decreasing the number of memory cycles per instruction. If, in addition, the stack is "cached" on chip, the number of memory cycles per instruction will drop considerably. And if this latter idea is properly extended to the instruction stream to create an "instruction stack," much like that on the CDC Cyber computer line or the Cray-1, the number of memory cycles can be reduced even further. This reduction of memory cycles should noticeably increase the speed of our hypothetical microprocessor.

Considering the impetus given to virtual stack machines by the Pascal P-code groups [3] and the Concurrent Pascal originators, [4] one wonders why these ideas have not been efficiently implemented in silicon. Must we wait for another generation?

- [1] L. Armstrong, "16-bit Wave Gathering Speed," Electronics, Vol 51, No. 4, Feb 16, 1978, pp 84-85
- [2] A good overview of stack machines can be found in the May 1977 issue of Computer.
- [3] References to these groups can be found in Pascal News, a publication of the Pascal User's Group.
- [4] Per Brinch Hansen, The Architecture of Concurrent Programs, Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.,